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DANTE

KARL WITTE

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ESSAYS ON DANTE

BY

DR. KARL WITTE

(BEING SELECTIONS FROM THE TWO VOLUMES OF 'DANTE-FORSCHUNGEN')

SELECTED, TRANSLATED AND EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES AND APPENDICES BY

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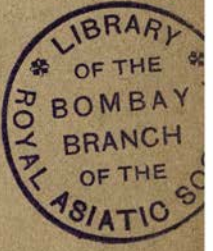

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TO J. L. TO A. R.

AND

TO L. M. W.

C. M. L. AND P. H. W.

NOTE

THE translation of the German portions of this work was drafted by C. MABEL LAWRENCE, who has also checked a great number of the references. For the translation of the Italian portions and the revision and editing of the whole, PHILIP H. WICKSTEED is responsible.

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INTRODUCTION

If the history of the revival of interest in Dante which has characterised this century should ever be written, Karl Witte will be the chief hero of the tale. He was, as we shall see, little more than a boy when, in 1823, he entered the lists against existing Dante scholars, all and sundry, demonstrated that there was not one of them that knew his trade, and announced his readiness to teach it to them.[1] The amazing thing is that he fully accomplished his vaunt. His essay exercised a growing influence in Germany, and then in Europe; and after five-and-forty years of indefatigable and fruitful toil, he was able to look back upon this youthful attempt as containing the germ of all his subsequent work on Dante.[2] But now, instead of an audacious young heretic and revolutionist, he was the acknowledged master of the most prominent Dante scholars in Germany, Switzerland, Italy, England, and America.

And this is typical of the all but incredible story of Witte's life. He was born on July 1, 1800, at Lochau bei Halle an der Saale. Before he had attained his majority he had had the misfortune (one would have thought irreparable) of having had a work in two volumes written by his father upon the development of his intellect.[3] It must be said in excuse of the elder Witte that he yielded to an exceptionally strong temptation. He was an educationalist, and had taught his son himself. He maintained that the boy had no exceptional talents, but he made such rapid

[1] See Essay II. in this volume. [2] See below, p. 61.
[3] *Karl Witte*, etc.; Leipzig, 1819.

progress as to matriculate in the University of Leipzig when he was nine and a half years old, and take his Doctor's degree, with a thesis on the 'Conchoid of Nicomedes,' a curve of the fourth degree, before he was fourteen. His linguistic was at least as great as his mathematical precocity.

In 1818 he travelled in Italy, and was in Florence at the close of the year. Ostensibly, and to some extent actually, he was studying law; but among the distractions which he allowed himself was a very miscellaneous purchase and examination of works of Italian literature. Amongst these purchases were two expensive editions of Dante, a poet of whom he confessed he had not read a single canto, and whom he had been forbidden to read by the Florentine lady who had undertaken to guide his Italian studies. 'We Italians,' she said, 'sometimes persuade ourselves that we understand this extraordinary poem—but we do not. If a foreigner sets about it we can scarcely repress a smile.' Our Admirable Crichton declares that he was somewhat daunted by this announcement, but not altogether dismayed. A friend with whom he was travelling had the kind of acquaintance with Dante characteristic of those days—he could declaim '*La bocca sollevò*' and the rest of the 'Ugolino' episode; to be followed (naturally) by 'Francesca da Rimini.' This friend successfully encouraged young Witte to neglect the warnings of his fair admonitress, and his Dante studies began there and then. It is interesting to compare the very similar experiences of John Carlyle,[1] and to note the changed attitude of mind, which has now turned from the 'beauties of Dante' to Dante, so largely through the efforts of Witte himself.

At the beginning of 1820 Witte was in Rome, expounding the *Inferno* to an artistic circle there. In the same year he formed a project for refuting, in an Italian essay, the latest attempt (by Marchetti) to give a pre-

[1] See the Introduction to his translation of the *Inferno*.

dominantly political and secular turn to the allegory of the poem. For the moment nothing came of this project, and in November 1821 Witte found himself settled in Breslau with no prospect of continuing his Dante studies. But Fortune threw him in the way of a young lady whose Italian studies had been broken off, to her great distress, by the loss of her Italian master. Naturally Witte undertook to supply his place; and others attended the lessons. The dignity of the occasion seemed to justify some general 'Introduction.' The material for the abandoned Italian article, spoken of just now, was re-examined, and in October 1823 the essay on the 'Art of Misunderstanding Dante,' which appears as the second essay in this volume, was written. The following year it was published in *Hermes*, and Witte had made his decisive entry upon the branch of study which he was destined to transform.

Soon afterwards Kannegiesser, favourably known by his translation of the *Comedy*, came to live at Breslau, and he and Witte struck an alliance, the elder scholar accepting, 'with most exemplary patience,' the co-operation of the younger one, says the latter. Henceforth the stream of Witte's works on Dante flowed steadily: Translations, Commentaries, Editions, Introductions, and Essays—*nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit, nullum quod tetigit non ornavit.*

Meanwhile Witte had been appointed in 1823 extraordinary Professor of Law at Breslau. In 1829 he succeeded to the ordinary Professorship, and in 1834 was transferred to Halle, still as Professor of Law, a branch of study on which he wrote important works.

'He lived in Halle for nearly fifty years, a loved and honoured teacher, a helpful and valued member of the professorial staff, a true patriot who had boldly stood at the head of the Preussenverein in the times of the Revolution a loyal conservative, a devout Christian and elder of the church, a scholar overwhelmed with orders and distinctions

a tender husband and father, till a gentle death closed his rich and singularly happy life on March 6th, 1883.'

This singularly happy life, however, had at one time felt a shattering blow that made a complete cessation of work and renewed foreign travel a pressing necessity. In 1825 Dr. Witte married, and lost his wife after only six weeks of wedlock. The unmistakable ring of deep personal experience, which even the casual reader could hardly fail to recognise in certain passages of the essay on Dante, written six years later, receives a moving commentary from this event. In 1834 Dr. Witte married a second time.[1]

A list of Dr. Witte's works on Dante will be found at the close of this Introduction, together with the complete table of contents of the two volumes of essays and special memoirs, the composition of which extends over the years from 1823 to 1879, collected by the author in his *Dante-Forschungen*, and issued respectively in 1869 and 1879.

These essays strike almost every note from the popular lecture to the elaborate treatment of such technical questions as the establishment of the text and the classification of manuscripts, and it is a selection from them that is presented to the public in the present volume. As to the wisdom of the selection made, the opinions of those acquainted with the original will, of course, differ. The principle adopted has been to omit: (1) those essays which are chiefly of local or temporary interest, such as a number of reviews of German translations of the *Comedy*; and indeed reviews in general; (2) those essays which are of a preponderatingly technical character, and especially those referring to the establishment of the text; (3) those essays which appear to the editor (and here there will be abundant

[1] The material for the above notes is gathered from Dr. Witte's introductions, an article in Meyer's *Conversazions-Lexicon*, and an obituary notice kindly sent to me by Dr. Leopold Witte.

room for dissent) to be of secondary merit or interest. There still remains great variety of subject and treatment. Some passages are so technical that they will doubtless be skipped by all but a few experts, and some so popular that all except beginners will desire fuller details and ampler references; but there is no essay which, taken as a whole, has not such general interest as appears to justify its inclusion in a volume intended for the general reader; and in the more technical or erudite portions of the essays I have endeavoured to give (in the notes and Appendices) such information as will enable the unlearned reader to follow the argument and understand the references. Indeed, the information contained in some of these notes is of a very elementary character; but it is just what every one is supposed to know that no one is ever told; and the student is often left to a long, uncertain, and painful course of inference with respect to the very foundations of some portions at least of his subject.

The order of the essays, which was not chronological in Witte's own collection, has been so re-cast as to secure something like a systematic sequence. The alternation of youthful and mature, of popular and technical work, which is the result, is certainly not unpleasant, and it is hoped that it will not be found perplexing. The date of the composition of each essay is carefully pointed out, and should not be forgotten by the reader.

The first three essays lay down Dr. Witte's general position, and place the reader at the point of view from which he would have him look at Dante's work as a whole. Essays IV. to VIII. deal with matter directly illustrative of Dante's works, with a growing reference to the circumstances of his life; the last two forming a natural transition to the next group (Essays IX. to XI.), which deals directly with biographical matters, and with the strange history of Dante's remains. Essays XII. to XV. refer to

dates, commentaries, and titles; and, finally, a concluding essay examines the relation of Dante's opinions to the movement which resulted in the establishment of United Italy.

In the original the more popular essays give the extracts from Dante in translation, and the more scholarly ones give the original text, with or without translations. I have determined, though not without hesitation and reluctance, to give translations in every case, except where the point of the argument turns directly on the use of Italian words. For experience (contrary to what we might expect) seems to indicate that the majority of people, who want translations at all, like to have all the languages translated. The logic is all the other way. There is no sense in assuming that students of Dante who do not read German will like to have French and Italian translated for them. Many will not; but I believe most will. I have therefore presented the book in an entirely English dress, not without a sigh. I can only hope that most of my readers will count it for righteousness, for some (with whom I am myself in sympathy) are sure to hold it in abomination.

The translations are in every case my own. I have aimed at making them as literal as is compatible with strict fidelity; for it is easy to be so literal as to be distinctly unfaithful, not only to the spirit, but to the bare meaning of the author. As I am inclined to think it a positive advantage to force the reader of a translation to recognise the fact that he has not the words of the author himself before him, and must not base any inferences on forms of expression, I have been at no pains always to give the same translation of passages which recur in different connections. I have only to add in this connection that I am conscious of here and there having borrowed a word, which I should not have been likely otherwise to hit upon, from Mr. George Musgrave's translation of the *Inferno*, as well

as from some of Dr. Garnett's translations, and probably from other sources also.

I have made no effort to bring Dr. Witte's essays, especially in the matter of bibliography, up to date; but I have tried to give the reader such indications that (so far as my own knowledge extends) he shall never be left with an essentially false impression as to the present position of any branch of Dante study, or without the means of pursuing his researches beyond the point at which they stood when Dr. Witte wrote.

But a more delicate question remains. Apart from matters of fact there is a considerable amount of controvertible matter in Dr. Witte's writings. To be acquainted with them is desirable on every ground, and is often essential to the bare comprehension of later work (such as Dr. Scartazzini's), which is already known in English translations. But it seemed scarcely desirable that the uninformed reader (and I hope that many, at least relatively, uninformed readers will study this book) should be left without any indication of the difficulties which Dr. Witte's opinions on some subjects of importance have to encounter, and the alternative views which should be compared with them before a judgment is arrived at. Here is a dilemma, for one of the most detestable forms of literature is that in which an editor or translator undertakes a running corrective and refuting commentary on his author, with nervous anxiety lest the reader should believe too much or too little. The editor who never dares to trust his author and his reader together for fear they should hatch mischief against *him*, who nervously directs where they are to join, and where they are to part hands; who is perpetually thrusting obtrusive suggestions between them, and fluttering and clucking to his chicks at every second line, is a person who ought to be suppressed by an inviolable conspiracy of inattention. I fear some

readers may think that I have not 'reformed this altogether,' but I trust that I shall be found, at any rate by comparison, to have 'reformed it indifferently.' The plan I have adopted is as follows:—

I have printed the essays exactly as they stand, and have only added editorial notes where a word of explanation seemed desirable for the better comprehension of the author's meaning, or in a few cases where a pertinent fact might be added, which would presumably have been inserted by Dr. Witte himself had he had access to it, or where it seemed clear that there was an oversight or misstatement of fact in the text. In this latter instance I have almost always been careful to avoid pointing out any bearing that the correction may have upon questions in which my own views differ from those of the author. Thus I have striven to let the author tell his own tale, without distracting the reader's attention. But for those who wish for help in estimating the intrinsic value of Dr. Witte's main contentions, I have added notes on the several essays in an Appendix, pointing out the main difficulties involved in his positions, and indicating my own view as to the direction in which we may look for a more satisfactory solution. If I have here and there given references, in the body of the essay, to these notes in the Appendix, it is not with a view of interrupting the reader, but simply for convenience of subsequent reference and comparison, should he wish to re-examine any point in dispute. I trust that by this means the objections to the inclusion of alien and partly hostile matter may be minimised, while any advantage that there may be in it will be fully secured.

In the notes and Appendix I have made few acknowledgments, and have scarcely attempted to indicate the literature on the subject. Much of the material is common property; nor do I claim originality for any views, or

credit for any citations, which I am not conscious of having met with elsewhere. It is quite possible that they may all have been brought forward in works that I have not seen or have forgotten. I therefore make no claim to originality in any particular; but I think I can say that I have given no statement in the Appendix or notes which does not rest upon a direct study of the ultimate source from which it professes to be derived.

Very special pains have been taken (supported by the inexhaustible patience and courtesy that have long been the tradition of the 'Central Desk' in the British Museum Reading Room) to verify the references throughout the work, and to control Dr. Witte's citations of the opinions of other scholars. To some few of the books referred to (notably Paur's works and the fourth of Dionisi's *Aneddoti*) I have not been able to obtain access, but, with these few exceptions, the works cited or referred to by Dr. Witte have been examined. When such an examination reveals a mistake in the figures of a reference, it is generally an easy matter to correct it; but when (as will sometimes, even if rarely, be the case) the authority appealed to does not seem fully to support the statement based upon it, or to justify the account given of it, the conscientious editor is something in the position of him whose diligent and nightly search under his bed is rewarded at last by the discovery of a burglar. What is he to do next? The present editor has endeavoured to treat each case on its own merits. A silent rectification is sometimes possible. In other cases, where this would seem too great a liberty to take with the author's work, a note has been added, and yet other cases have been indicated by a query inserted in square brackets, as on pp. 42 and 242. Dr. Witte himself has adopted this last method for indicating statements in his early work by which he is not prepared to stand, but which, for some reason, he does not care to expunge or recast, as on p. 31;

but, as a rule, the reader will have no difficulty in distinguishing the queries of the editor from those of the author; and either may serve indifferently to warn him against accepting the statements to which they are attached too implicitly. Queries enclosed in round brackets are always the author's.

I have only to add that Dr. Witte (at any rate in the first volume of the *Forschungen*) was scrupulous in indicating any departures in his essays as reproduced in his collected volumes from the form in which they originally appeared, and also in distinguishing additions made respectively in 1869 and 1878. Piety towards my author has led me to follow him in observing a more scrupulous care in this matter than I might otherwise have thought necessary.

I have generally added the date of notes or insertions made at the time of re-issue by the author, and when this cannot conveniently be done they are included in square brackets. My own notes are indicated by the addition of 'Ed.' In a few cases, which are quite insignificant, the reader may have no means of knowing whether explanatory insertions in square brackets are by the author or the editor.

P. H. W.

LIST OF DR. WITTE'S WORKS ON DANTE

[See *Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i. pp. 510, 511; vol. ii. p. 606.]

Saggio di emendazioni al testo dell' Amoroso Convivio di Dante Allighieri. —C. W. le raccolse; le pubblicò il Profess. Odoardo Gerhard. Giornale Arcadico di Roma, 1825 Agosto.

Dante Allighieri's lyrische Gedichte, in Italian and German, by K. Ludwig Kannegiesser. Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1827.

The recension of the Italian text, and the essay 'über Aechtheit, Bedeutung und Anordnung der lyr. Ged., die Dante beigelegt werden' (pp. 356-390), and the 'Anmerkungen' (pp. 391-489), are due to Dr. Witte. Nine of the sonnets, three of the canzoni, and three of the ballads were translated by him.

The Italian text, with extracts from the notes, was reproduced by Giovanni Fornaro: *Le poesie liriche di Dante Allighieri.* Roma, Menicanti, 1843.

Dantis Allighieri Epistolae quae exstant, cum notis. Patavii, sub signo Minervae (Vratisl. ap. editorem), 1827.

This work, with insignificant supplements to the explanatory notes, has been incorporated into all later editions of Dante's Letters.

Dante Allighieri's lyrische Gedichte übersetzt und erklärt von K. Ludwig Kannegiesser und Karl Witte. Zweite Auflage. Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1842.

The 'zweite Theil' (pp. lxxxii and 239) is exclusively the work of Dr. Witte, together with the translations of nineteen sonnets, six canzoni, and five ballads.

Alcuni supplimenti alla Bibliografia Dantesca del Sign. Visconte Colomb de Batines. Lipsia, J. A. Barth, 1847.

Praefatio ad Dantis Allighieri Divina Commedia hexametris latinis redditam ab Abb. dalla Piazza Vicentino. Lips., J. A. Barth, 1848.

Cento, e più correzioni al testo delle Opere minori di Dante Allighieri proposte agli ill. Sign. Acc. della Crusca. Halle, Hendel, 1853.

Nuove correzioni al Convito di Dante Allighieri. Lipsia, Weigel, 1854.

Die ersten Gesänge von Dantes Göttliche Komödie, als Probe einer neuen Uebersetzung. Halle, Heynemann, 1861.

La Divina Commedia di Dante Allighieri ricorretta sopra quattro dei più autorevoli testi a penna. Berlino, Decker, 1862.

La Divina Commedia di Dante Allighieri. Edizione minore, fatta sul testo dell' edizione critica. Berlino, Decker, 1862.

The text of this edition was very accurately reproduced by Eugenio Camerini: *La Divina Commedia di Dante Allighieri secondo la lez. di C. W.*, Milano, Daelli, 1864, and forms the basis of the same scholar's edition of the *Comedy*, with Doré's illustrations, Milano, Sonzogno, 1868-9. The whole *apparatus criticus* is incorporated in: *Il Cod. Cassinese della Divina Commedia* per cura dei Monaci Benedettini della Badia di Monte Cassino, 1865.

Dantis Allighieri Monarchia manuscriptorum ope emendata (Lib. i.). Hal. Formis Hendeliis, 1863.

Dante Allighieri's Göttliche Komödie. Uebersetzt von Karl Witte. Berlin, R. v. Decker, 1865. Two editions, 8vo and 16mo.

Dantis Allighieri Monarchia manuscriptorum ope emendata (Lib. ii.). Hal. Hendel, 1867.

Seven articles in the *Jahrbuch der deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft*, vol. i. Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1867.

Dantis Allighieri Monarchia (Lib. iii.). Halis, Formis Hendeliis, 1871.

Dantis Allighieri De Monarchia libri tres, codicum manuscriptorum ope emendati. Editio altera. Vindob., Guil. Braumüller, 1874.

Dante Allighieri's Göttliche Komödie. Uebersetzt von Karl Witte. Dritte Ausgabe. Erster Band—Text. Zweite Band—Erläuterungen. Berlin, Decker, 1876.

La Vita Nuova di Dante Allighieri, ricorretta coll' ajuto di testi a penna, ed illustrata da Carl Witte. Leipzig, Brockhaus, 1876.

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ESSAYS ON DANTE

I.—DANTE

BRESLAU, 1831

Inscribed to Domprediger Blanc of Halle

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i. pp. 1-20 (1869).]

THE Gothic cathedral has been regarded as the symbol of that mediæval spirit of which it is itself the purest product. And it is easy to carry the comparison down into detail. Two summits rise triumphantly above the chapels, arches, gables, and pinnacles, as if inspiring and directing the whole lift of the pile, and standing for the common types of all the other parts. But even they, boldly as they rise into the air, and mightily as buttress and pillar thrust them upward, for the most part fail in their ascent long ere the crowning point of the pyramid shows the way beyond the clouds and casts upon the ground the dial-shadow to regulate the ways of men. There are weird traditions of how the wondrous building rose to such heights through no rightful aid, how the Evil One himself had a hand in their construction, here smuggling his buildings into the world as the houses of God, there hurling down the eager master-builder from the towers of the half-finished work. And so the people look with shuddering awe upon the pile—unfinished, yet beginning to fall to pieces already,—and ever remain in doubt which side is built in honour of God and which in honour of the devil.

In like fashion the *Empire* and the *Papacy* at first rose parallel and harmonious above mediæval society. But they soon forgot that both alike were but called to complete and crown the visible Church of God; and while each sought to outstrip the other's growth, each taxed the other with serving the powers of darkness under pretext that they were the powers of light; while all the time each was trembling on its own foundations. Then, as in the Cathedral of Cologne, the lowly built their tabernacles between the two, and none could guess that the twin giants were portions of a single temple.[1]

In the thirteenth century, the *Church*, which looked to the successors of St. Peter as her head, though not seriously undermined by reformed doctrines and heresies, found a formidable rival to her prestige in the growing spirit of secular learning which was penetrating everywhere. The scholastic philosophy, which the Arabian sages had been largely instrumental in spreading throughout Europe, could never give the lie to her heathen origin. For though the philosophers claimed no more than hypothetical validity for any conclusions they might reach on the field of revealed truth, yet the mere fact that it was considered desirable to find a basis in philosophy as well as in revelation for such doctrines as the existence of God and the Incarnation, implied the independent value attributed to philosophy in this connection; and it was only a small step further to accept her teachings even in cases when they embodied a real or apparent contradiction of the doctrine of the Church. Under such guidance, men must have felt impelled not merely to test and purge the Church doctrine, but to exalt themselves above Christianity itself. For they saw ignorant and greedy monks, like the degenerate Franciscans, preaching a narrow superstition to the masses with whom they fraternised, or the harsh Dominicans,

[1] So was it [in 1831]; thank Heaven, it is no longer so [in 1869].

proclaiming a doctrine of loveless severity; and the head of the Church himself turning aside to worldly interests. On the other hand, the pursuit of philosophy, which then summed up every branch of knowledge, and was not yet lost in the barbarities of form which afterwards strangled it, would be far more attractive to the thoughtful mind, as it opened out on every side vistas of new conquests in the field of knowledge, and the overthrow of ancient prejudice. Moreover, this philosophy received the homage of all the bolder thinkers and leading spirits of the civilised world; and the culture of Arabia, hand in hand with its joyousness and its more refined luxury, penetrated to the courts of the princes from Spain and Sicily alike. Amongst courts, that of Frederick II., which was the centre of this school of thought, may be taken as a typical example, while amongst the peoples the Provençals had gone furthest in this direction. Now it was this very Frederick II. whom the Church denounced as her greatest enemy, and her attitude would have been the same, even if the court had not been a centre of riotous living, immorality, and scoffing impiety. The numerous political pamphlets disseminated by Frederick, his chancellor and his followers, were the first which disturbed the edifice of the Church and shook her position in the minds of the peoples; though as yet they were far from attaining the audacity of the later lampoons written for Ludwig of Bavaria. At the end of the century, then, the Church, under Boniface's guidance, was still free from the later enormities of the Popes of Avignon, and appeared more daring, victorious, and exalted than ever before; but it was the exaltation of the volcano's cone, shooting upward with its last remaining strength ere it falls in upon itself.

The *Empire*, which to the mediæval imagination seemed greater and mightier than that of Rome had ever been, in point of fact was never strong enough to maintain the

boundaries of its immeasurable realms against any attacks which might be made on it; and in Dante's day it presented a singular spectacle enough. It is like a deserted city whose dreaded ruler, now turned to some totally different quarter, has left gate and turret unoccupied, but can yet protect his walls against the pressure of his enemies by the mere terror of his name, a terror only to be gradually dulled by the lapse of time. And in this sense the legends are right enough when they recount how Frederick Barbarossa remained in this life many years longer than historians admit, a colossal figure seated on the mountains. And whenever an ambitious Emperor directed his gaze southwards, Frederick's shadow stalked before him, the Church seized her old arms against him, and the people greeted him with the old homage. In fact it is but a few years since the people of Rome built a triumphal arch to celebrate the entry of *their* Emperor into the city, in 1819. But the shrewd spirits well knew that this Empire was but an impalpable phantom, and that the decrees of her ruler could easily be set aside by a little obstinacy or a show of concession. It was only to the childlike and superstitious that it appeared as a terrible 'Knecht Ruprecht.' It was but a hundred years since the Italian cities had opposed the Emperor in serious and honourable strife, as the faithful and obedient 'estates' of a kingdom might unflinchingly resist a ruler who strove to overthrow their ancient privileges. While this struggle with the Emperor lasted the Papacy had been the one bond of union to which the cities never refused to subordinate themselves. This union had long since passed away, but clever and self-seeking tyrants and demagogues had not been slow to avail themselves of the old names of the ecclesiastical or imperial parties in order to secure adherents and outside help in their private struggles.

There were Ghibellines fighting in Italy at a time when

no Emperor would have seriously thought of calling Rome his capital. The fear of the Empire was still inscribed in letters of blood on the walls of Milan, but the respect which might have been paid it was already destroyed, not so much by the fulminations of Alexander and Innocent as by the indifference which the Emperors themselves had shown, ever since the middle of the century, with respect to all occasions for action beyond the limits of Germany. The Ezzelins, the Malatestas, and the Visconti oppressed their lately liberated subjects with a cruelty unknown in the most brutal ages, and in return the people were filled with a fierce lust of freedom and passion for revenge. But with the last of the Hohenstaufens the gentle restraining power of the Emperor had entirely disappeared, and the cold, covetous Anjous of Naples, more selfish than the Popes themselves, never offered their help, even to their friends, except to bring them under their own power. Tuscany again, while freer from external tyrants than Lombardy or Romagna, was torn by a yet fiercer strife of factions, which again and again, while still fighting under the old names of the adherents of Pope or Emperor, pitted the old noble houses against the new aristocracy of wealth, or both together against the fierce democracies, and often kept a good half of the citizens in banishment from their homes.

Thus, the pillars of the age rose up, not as supports to bear a mighty pediment, but as the crags bordering a chasm whose yawning abyss threatened to engulf the harvest and flocks around. Then came Dante's divine poem. The long-forgotten image of the great world-minister, the eternal temple of the Holy Grail, appeared once more to his eyes, and in holy zeal he hurled the disfiguring additions of a degenerate age from the sacred pinnacles. He was so penetrated by the conviction that the immeasurable edifice was not merely the Church of

God, but the Will of God, that the thousand impediments which met him disappeared before his entranced vision, till it stood before him in its heavenly glory. The stones which seemed all in revolt unite again and subordinate themselves to the eternal harmony, and the scene of strife is—not swallowed in the peace of death, but—transformed into the temple of the Lord. So Dante stands as an idealist in the midst of his age, and preaches the gospel of the kingdom of God, an offence to one party and foolishness to the other. And the man who thus reaches out his hand to grasp the wheel of history is not a mighty prince, but a needy exiled poet, who at first, not so much by choice as by the accident of birth, belonged to the more moderate of the Guelfic factions, but afterwards united more intimately with the friends of the Emperor, or rather strove to set himself entirely free from any blind partisanship, and thereby made his friends on one side as few as on the other. He chides the Emperor for his dilatoriness, and summons him to put an end to the feuds and tyranny of the small principalities, and to restrain France's shameless greed for gold and land. He chides the Pope, not in order to overthrow the power of the Papal See in the Church, and thus to reform Catholicism, but to urge him to set his face against priestly greed and underhand interference in the affairs of the world, that the two pillars of Christendom may stand together in harmony, the one turned to the North, and the other to the South. He is a Ghibelline, then, inasmuch as he sees that the equilibrium is disturbed to the disadvantage of the Empire, but he puts a strict limit to the power of the Emperor, he preserves the deepest reverence for the Papacy, he attacks the Ghibelline Ezzelino and praises the Guelf Malaspina, while the furious champions of Frederick's cause and the lampoonists of Ludwig of Bavaria would both have regarded him as a menial of the Pope's.

The two world-pillars are based on Faith and Obedience. Peter's successor must arouse and maintain, in the breasts of the people committed to his charge, a sincere and humble piety, and an unconditional dependence on the teaching of that Church with whom Christ had promised ever to abide until the end of the world. He must lead his flock in good works, and above all in a spirit of humility; and must teach them to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. For the Emperor's power, too, must be recognised and respected, as given him by God for the ordering and guidance of all the relations of civil life. Dante turns a deaf ear to proud dreams of State reform and the plausible demand for legal guarantees, such as crowd upon us in this latter age, when the easiest of all the virtues, that of obedience, is fleeing from the earth. The moral significance of the commonwealth forms a part of his religion, and he sees in the true monarchy the only possible realisation of this commonwealth. He finds the safeguards against tyranny in the height at which the Emperor stands above private passions, and in the divine spirit that guides history. In State, therefore, as in Church, he can only see salvation in joyous unwearying obedience.

But the inspired poet does not drop into a mere teacher of bald political wisdom. He does not stand outside and trace the plan of the temple on the barren sand, but takes his consecrated place on the altar steps, and through the clouds of incense he holds the symbol of redemption before the people, well knowing that the tabernacle in his hands is the true model of the finished edifice, reproducing at the same time the archetype of the universe and the invisible Church of God. The matter of his song is his (or rather humanity's) wanderings from the way of God, and rescue through the Christian faith; yet with one arm he embraces the abyss of Hell, and with the other he reaches the utmost Heaven with its countless stars. Even

so! For the redemption of mankind is at the same time the peace of humanity, and the well-ordered and pious city is a distant reflex of the heavenly Jerusalem; and all through nature we find the reflection of the fall and the redemption of man.

Thus the most special and the most universal aspects of life are intertwined throughout the whole poem. Insignificant details of daily life, and struggles for the Empire of the World prolonged through centuries, nay, the very conflict between good and evil itself—all meet and find in each other the symbols that interpret and complete them. Hence the poem embraces the universe as no other does; but it is not by vagueness of outline that it would make us feel the conception of eternity. Sharp and clear the edifice stands before us as a mediæval Cathedral, and shoots its tapering pinnacles into the ether. Dante's Hell does not float in the Kimmerian mists of Homer, his Paradise is not volatilised, like Klopstock's, into a 'veil woven of beams of primal light,' but he draws the eternal spaces with a firm, clean sweep of hand, so that the imagination can traverse them step by step. And for that very reason the place he has drawn is no product of a feverish dream, like Breughel's wild Hell-scapes, but is based firm on the uncontested teachings of the science of his age, and the time-honoured beliefs of the people. And yet the depths of symbolic meaning with which he has inspired it, and the artistic form into which he has thrown it, make it a creation all his own.

Thus Dante belongs neither to the ancient nor to modern thought, nor yet does he float like a feather through the ages, striking no roots anywhere. In him are focussed all the rays of the Middle Ages, and the inimical and contradictory tendencies of the time unite, not to neutralise each other like magnetic forces and produce indifference, but to combine like the colours, that are severally the symbols of conflicting parties, at the focus of white and

shining light. In the vault that spans the great nave he is borne up by the counter-thrust of the blocks on either side, and confines them as the keystone of the arch; just as in the churches of the period the representation raised high over the west entrance so often gives the key to all the varied and changing frescoes that adorn the walls which stretch on either side. Or we might compare the poet to the lotus-bloom, the symbol of the eternal life, which floats in peaceful beauty over the raging waves, while Brahma, lost in self-contemplation, journeys in her and moves the universe from stage to stage. So the personality of the poet is lost in consummated objectivity; and just as the priest of the faith to which this song is dedicated sinks his own failings and idiosyncrasies, to appear solely as the instrument of God, so has Dante's life passed away, wellnigh without a trace, in that history of which his poem constitutes a whole epoch; whereas we can record the doings of wellnigh every week of the life of his pleasant, friendly, vain contemporary, Petrarch!

Unappreciative centuries have passed thoughtlessly by the temples of Pæstum and the erections of Mediæval Teutonism alike. And in the same way the short-sighted vision of later ages, estranged from the spirit of Dante's immortal poem, though not exactly ignoring it, has been incapable of recognising the splendour of the outward form, much more of penetrating into the inner spirit, or comprehending its deep symbolism and its wealth of allegorical meaning. Dare we attempt to catch the fundamental thought of the *Divine Comedy*, and set it forth in a few strokes, which will wake an echo in the inner experience of every heart?—or rather to lay open the deeper significance of that poetic trilogy into which, maybe unconsciously to himself, Dante's life shaped itself?

In early childhood the poet's soul had been kindled to a

pure passion, such as might still arise in some great soul. To the heart which, as yet undaunted by the blows of fortune, is full of childlike joyousness, all heaven seems to rise in its Beatrice, its 'blessing one.' Her beauty, her goodness, all her perfection, are but the sign of the infinite love of God, so that even her physical charms arouse no lust for possession, but are a source of a consecrated joy in the glory which God has made manifest in his creature. There is no room for unsatisfied longing, for jealousy, or for complaint. The beloved herself is but the most wondrous and precious of the flowers that bloom in the great garden of God, before which we stand in silent rejoicing, inhaling the perfume without desiring to pluck the rose. Her voice is but that of the most melodious of the thousands of nightingales to whom we hearken, without wishing to seize and cage them.—The beauty of the flowers, the solemnity of the forest, and the songs of praise raised by the birds, tell of the glory of Nature and the goodness of her Creator, and bring transports of purest joy to the ravished heart. Yet this joyous piety is ineffably deeper and more inspired when the praise of the Lord is taught to our hearts, not by the unconscious voice of flower, bird, and beast, but by the perfection of a beloved spirit which is itself surrendered in pure devotion to God. No need to call a love like this the allegory of piety, it is itself the vision of God upon earth. And it is to this love that the *Vita Nuova* is consecrated.

But we find on nearer view that the very Nature which smiles on us so genially is poisoned at the source. The joyous life which led us on to gratitude to the Creator of all, sprang from awful cruelty, and can only be maintained by the same. Scarce one sentient being can live without compassing deaths for hundreds of others, and all these sacrifices lead to naught but a useless and unending reiteration of the same old cycle. Dante had arrived at man's

estate when Beatrice was reft from him by the iron hand of death,—she who had taught his eye to look in joyous thanks to Heaven, because she was the object of a love so consecrated by pure devoutness that he fancied he had wrested it from the transience of earthly things.—There may be privileged beings, who even in such a terrible moment can hold fast to a joyful acquiescence in the will of God. But our poet was as incapable as many another, whether in his day or ours, of straightway raising to heaven —alone and without a guide—those eyes which the beloved had hitherto directed upwards. The feelings that inspired him of old were no longer his in his abandoned loneliness. The heaven to which he would look had hurled upon his life a ruin greater than any bliss which it had ever yet vouchsafed him. Questions as to the hidden reasons for such apparent cruelty could not be silenced by a belief in the love and goodness of God, which had been shaken to its foundations.

Well can we pardon those whose trust and confidence, which seemed so firm, fail them in such a moment. Well may we pardon the souls who were foremost in their exultant recognition of the joy that is now gone, if, in their blindness, they are now loudest in their reproaches against Him who has changed his blessings into chastisements. But all the higher does our reverence mount for those others who, like our poet, strive to beat down despair by straining for the solution of the dark secret, even though their research should turn them away from the religion to which, in their wretchedness, they can no longer look with any hope of consolation, and lead them into the arms of a presumptuous and overweening philosophy.

This, the only form of activity of which the shattered spirit is as yet capable, gradually leads to others; and Speculation, in all her branches, presents herself as a friend

and comforter to the broken heart. Dante, after the allegorical fashion of his day, depicts her as a gracious maiden in whose glance he seems to find a reflection of Beatrice's love and a look of heavenly pity. Many a disconsolate soul has found that zealous effort for others, or for the common good, has been capable of bringing long seasons of calm, and he who has once acclimatised himself to this atmosphere may well end by finding his home and his mission there. So was it with the poet after Beatrice's death. At first his love was won by the study of abstract philosophy. Then he turns to ethics, and inquires into the nature of justice, courage, and magnanimity; he develops his ideas of the right ordering of the State, of the significance of the great events of his day, and dedicates his life to the realisation of what he has come to recognise as the true ideal. His share in the active politics of his native city falls in this period of his life; and so does the elaboration of his views on language and poetry.

But if there are dark moments in which the shattered spirit can find nothing more than a comfortless tradition in Christianity itself, it is vain indeed to look for lasting peace in the wanderings and gropings of the unaided spirit of man. After a brief period its march is arrested by the impassable limits of our capacity which hedge it in on every side, and at last its early comfort is replaced by the weariness of a bootless struggle.

The *Convivio Amoroso* depicts this fruitless strife, this unrewarded love, this vain hope, ever fed by the belief that redoubled efforts will wring from philosophy the blessings she withholds. Restless and joyless is this love, for the peace of childlike abandonment, which asks nothing in return, has fled from the poet's breast. While vainly and vehemently demanding fresh favours from the beloved one, he imagines that she turns from him in hardness of heart, until ultimately, though with bitter complaints, he acknow-

ledges that love itself, even when it meets with no response, is its own highest reward.

The zeal for right and truth, kindled in the poet's breast by this love, could not wholly save him from falling under the party names of the conflicts of his time, for no one can completely escape from the conditions imposed by his surroundings. Earthly cares and the rising tide of passions threatened to draw him into their vortex, and, when once his thoughts were turned to this transitory life of earth, it may well be that his receptive spirit sometimes allowed access to new charms of mortal beauty. For even while Philosophy unveiled to him that countenance of her Janus head, that gazes far beyond the bounds of earth, and points away from earthly temptations and the turmoil of earthly conflicts to the steep path of speculation, yet the beaming eyes of his leader shed no light on that path by which divine revelation alone can lead us to the goal.

Dante, long led astray from the way of humble Christian faith to the pride of free speculation, sees the way of truth barred by those evil passions whose counterparts are to be found in the three Christian virtues. Instead of *hoping* for the kingdom of God which is to be, he lives in the present and its pleasures, and his heart is filled with self-seeking. Instead of having *faith* in the divine revelation, and abandoning himself utterly to it, he is infatuated by spiritual pride, which persuades him that his own intellect is capable of fathoming the hidden things of Eternity. And finally, instead of *love*, hatred fills his breast with party passion, envy, and a spirit of persecution against his erring brothers, or those who hold opinions differing from his own. And so he finds himself driven, as by savage beasts, from the slopes of that mountain whose summit gleams in the rays of the Sun of truth, into a life of storm and darkness.

Then the grace of God kindles the light of religion in his bosom once more. He sees the fruitlessness, nay, sin-

fulness, of the presumptuous speculations of the intellect concerning things which must ever remain unfathomable to it. He repents of having fallen into all these errors, and of his excessive devotion to the transitory interests of earth, and the old faith and the old love of the glorified Beatrice awake with fresh power. On the day on which the Saviour redeemed mankind on the cross, in the year when by the feast of the Jubilee the Church sought in fresh ways to lead back the Christian to heaven, Dante's spirit also is released. But his newly awakened faith is no longer the almost unconscious belief of a joyous, childlike spirit. It is the outcome of long years of doubt and error, now securely armed against all storms from without or wavering within by firmly rooted philosophical proofs. Just as his love to the living Beatrice was inseparably bound up with faith's thankful upward gaze to God, so now that she has risen to heaven she becomes to him a symbol of Theology, the luminous and illuminating science which stands as queen above all the rest.

Yet the burden of his former errors still presses on his soul, and the Church to which Dante belongs teaches that he can only enter into the glory of God's presence when the open acknowledgment of his transgression in this estrangement of his soul from God has been followed by contrition and the corresponding penance, that the stains which obscure its native purity may be washed from his soul.

Here begins the *Divine Comedy*, completing the great poem of which the *Vita Nuova* and the *Convivio Amoroso* are the first two sections. This whole trilogy in its everlasting truth forms the universal epos of our spiritual life. It is the history of the childlike simplicity, the inward backsliding, and the gracious summons by which God leads us back to himself, who alone is Light, Truth, and Life. The form is that of the inward experiences of a poet who

died half a millennium ago, yet the path he followed is that which must be trodden by every Christian, save a few chosen ones, if they are to attain salvation. And so the poet stands as the type of the whole race of fallen man, called to salvation; man who is burdened by the weight of a thousand different sins, but to whom the Christ reaches out a thousand arms, to snatch him out of the gulf to his breast.

It is no longer merely his own transgressions of which Dante repents and for which he does penance; he mourns the sins of the whole world, and would seek to find once more the way to the Saviour in the name of all the erring. Therefore must he follow all the innumerable by-paths by which the prince of darkness entices the human race astray. But now he no longer rests on the pride of human understanding, but has submitted himself to the guidance of that Reason which Beatrice herself sends him as a guide. For now he is led by Virgil, who even in heathen times prophesied the truths of Christianity. His eyes are opened, and the mere sight of the sins suffices to reveal them to him in all their gruesome nakedness. Their dazzling exterior disappears, the tawdry lights under which the deluded ones took what they vainly called their pleasure are extinguished, and ancient night, with all her horrors, re-appears. What seemed the delights and pleasures of love show themselves now as a devastating storm; the bloodthirsty tyrant who thought to crown his crimes with enduring good fortune when he came to the throne now finds the blood he has spilt pouring and boiling round him, while the arrows of passion tear his heart unceasingly; the delusive halo fades from the head of the hypocrite, and the eye recognises the oppressive weight of the cloak of gilded lead which is hung about him; the apparent success of the traitor sinks back into nothingness, and frozen and rigid he stands there in the icy coldness of

his loveless heart. Thus Hell itself is neither more nor less than the protraction of unrepented sin; the symbolic interpretation of the sinful life. The punishment is the act itself, not its counterpart.

Pierced by pity and horror for sin, Dante now climbs the weary path which shall free him from all guilt, and lead him back to the first purity. But penance consists in the laborious task of breaking free from the sins to which the soul has grown inured. In love and hope it brings both pain and healing, while the longer it endures the more strength it imparts to the soul, whereby it may gain courage to rise to the summit of the mountain. The proud are bowed down to earth under grievous burdens; the eyes of the envious are closed by the torturing thread, that the good of their neighbour may no longer stir them to evil thoughts; the keenness wherewith the slothful are now impelled to straining haste is proportioned to their former negligence of good; and finally the gluttonous learn self-control by being ever in sight of fairest fruits, while sternly refraining from all food and drink. Purgatory then is but the continuation of penitence. The punishments are not the outpouring of the righteous wrath of God, but only the healing means by which He saves many a precious soul for heaven.

When these healing sufferings have been gladly received, and have completed their purifying influence, religion sinks with heavenly clearness into the purified heart, and lifts it above earthly weaknesses and limitations to the bourn of infinite grace and divine radiance. Diverse are the steps, manifold the paths, to the knowledge of God. The fervent glowing simpleness of heart of St. Francis, the God-devoted learning of Thomas Aquinas, the pious wealth of action of a Godfrey de Bouillon, and the silent contemplation of a Bernard of Clairvaux, all spring from God, and all lead to him. Led through all these grades of knowledge

by his symbolic guide, this soul, so fiercely tried so graciously preserved, may at last see face to face, and 'hear unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter' (2 *Cor.* xii. 4).

It is no indifferent matter that the form of a poem which unites the Antique and the Modern, the Ghibelline and the Guelf, in one mighty edifice, should fully correspond to its subject. Dante wrote not in Latin, the language of learning and to a large extent of the cultured classes generally, but in the newly formed Italian tongue. Those who maintain that the lowly and popular style in which he resolved to clothe his poem determined his choice of the vernacular show a woeful narrowness. For the grounds lie far deeper. When one civilisation decays and a second springs up from its ruins, the early growth of the second is not a mere reproduction of the youth of the first, a Phœnix rising from its ashes, as epoch follows epoch in the secular year. The new age does not bear the paternal remains swathed in myrrh to the temple of the Sun. Rather does the new form, as a new phase of history, outgrow the old culture and throw aside the husk of the old incarnation as the growing fruit casts off the petals of the flower, and the butterfly leaves the empty chrysalis. At first naught but destruction and decay are to be discerned. The ancient palaces sink in ruins. Marbles and pillars are grubbed up from among their ruins, and are built, mutilated and meaningless, into the walls of some new chapel. But soon they begin to rise again and tower upward, utterly transformed from their former significance; and, over the ruins of the graceful Roman temple, uplifts itself the dauntless strength of the solemn Gothic church. And so it was with the speech of Italy. At first a mere popular garbling of the Latin tongue, it

gradually took to itself Teutonic and Christian elements, and awakened to a life of its own; though as yet in its unthinking fluctuations it knew not what was falling petal and what was ripening fruit, and only tested and developed itself in songs of love and spring-time.

Then Dante arose, and with his magic wand awakened a new life throughout the whole wide field of the language, so that it could build not merely a window here and a door there, but the whole mighty cathedral, when once it had leave to carry out and complete the task.

TWO SONNETS ON DANTE BY MICHAEL ANGELO

(Literally translated from Guasti's text.)

I

True speech may not be spoken of the man. Too bright for our blindness was the enkindled flash. Easier to condemn the folk that wronged him, than for the greatest to rise level with his meanest worth.

Down to the recompence of sin he went for our behoof, and then rose Godward. But gates which Heaven threw back, his country barred against his righteous longing.

Ungrateful, nursing her own woe to her destruction! Whereof the sign is that her worthiest sons are made by her to weep the most.

Among a thousand other proofs this one: On him whose like nor better ne'er was born, fell the unworthy ban unparalleled.

II

He came from heaven. In mortal frame he scanned the torture-house of justice, and the one of pity, and went back alive to gaze upon the face of God, that he might bring true light to us concerning all.

A shining star that brightened with its rays the nest, all undeserving, wherein I was born! Not the whole guilty world could make his recompence, for Thou alone who didst create him art his due reward.

I speak of Dante, whose deeds won hate of that ungrateful folk from whom all find a welcome, save the just.

But would that I were he! Might I be born to such a fate, I would barter earth's most envied lot for his drear exile and his virtue.

II.—THE ART OF MISUNDERSTANDING DANTE[1]

HERMES XXII. 1824

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i. pp. 21-65 (1869).]

DANTE'S immortal poem has been reproduced in some five-and-twenty editions during the last twenty years; and it is indisputable that no previous period of the same length has ever produced much more than half the number. Surely, it will be said, this means that a new love of the divine work has awakened, and the way is at least being prepared for a comprehension of its true significance; and in further support of this belief may be alleged the fact that whereas but one new commentary had been produced for two hundred and twenty years before, the last thirty years have increased their number by no less than five or six.[2]

[1] The present article was written in October 1823, before I had seen the writings of Mehus, Dionisi, and others. Special circumstances delayed the publication, and I had the opportunity of looking over my work once more in August 1824. But I found that unless I was to rewrite the article I must confine myself to a few additions, and must refrain from following up Dionisi's view, so nearly related to my own, and giving it the prominence which I could now wish. [These pages were originally written in connection with two editions of the *Divina Commedia*, then new (namely, Biagioli's, Paris, 1818-19, and De Romanis', 1820-22, which latter is a recast of Lombardi's); and also with reference to Count Giov. Marchetti's treatise on the Allegory of the *Divina Commedia* (Bologna, 1819), Scip. Colelli's *Illustrazioni Della Divina Commedia* (Rieti, 1822), and Giov. Gasparo Orelli's Biography of the poet (in the *Chronichette d'Italie*, Coira, 1822, vol. ii.).—1869.]

[2] Since the appearance of this article the number of commentaries has

Greatly should I rejoice were this favourable impression founded on fact; and indeed I gladly acknowledge how much ground has been won for the poet since the close of the unhappy seventeenth century. I rejoice in this increasing number of readers and admirers, and I hope that Dante himself will educate his disciples, as I know he is sedulously and quietly doing. But in spite of the admiration of editors and scholiasts, I cannot but feel that there is a misapprehension of his meaning, a misconception similar to that of the Alexandrine exponents of Homer, or say the English Shakespeare commentators. In the following pages I shall endeavour to indicate the lines of what might be called the modern Dante Criticism; I shall point out how wide of the mark this school has shot; and finally I shall endeavour, though it be only with a few weak strokes,

grown considerably, and the charges urged later on in the text are wholly, or in great part, inapplicable to some of these later commentators. Paolo Costa's notes had already appeared in their earliest and very meagre form (1819-21); see below, pp. 38, 52. They have passed through numerous editions, having been frequently added to by their author, and since 1844 have had valuable additions from Brunone Bianchi. From 1854 onwards the latter has combined his own work and that of his predecessor, thereby forming one of the most useful and widely read of all the commentaries.—The edition with Pietro Fraticelli's notes deservedly enjoys an almost equal popularity. It has steadily expanded since its first appearance in 1837. Francesco Gregoretti (1856) combines the utmost attainable brevity with as much material as the beginner wants. Emiliano Guidici (1847) and Giuseppe Bozzo, of Palermo (1837), are still more sparing of their notes, which indeed are scarcely adequate. Of the latter I only know annotations on the *Inferno*. [Completed by 1855.—ED.] On the other hand, Niccolo Tommaseo's notes (in the two editions published in 1837 and 1856) are the outcome of very extensive knowledge and original research.

But the German reader will scarcely need reminding that in many ways the explanations given by Philalethes in his translation are far better than any of these Italian commentaries. Translators into other languages also have often made valuable contributions towards the better comprehension of the poem. The Frenchman Artaud, for example (1811 and several times subsequently), the Russian Min (1855), the Dutch Hacke van Mijnden (1867), the Englishmen Cary and Cayley, and above all the American Longfellow (1867).—1869.

to place over against all this Dante's own purpose, as I understand it, in writing the poem.

True love loses itself entirely in its object, takes it where it finds it, pierces the intervening centuries and emerges at its side, to receive it on its own terms, without being so much as conscious of any requirements of its own. But there is a false love which is only directed to the counterpart of itself in all its environment. Kindled by the joy of finding its own sensations meeting it from outside, it treats the object it has found as a mere lay-figure to be generously robed in itself, in order thereby to acquire a larger bulk of material on which to lavish its affection. Dante has had his full share of admirers of this type. He has been extolled beyond measure because in many directions he almost reached the standard of our own enlightened days. He has been called a great poet because he shadows forth the modern theory as to the origin of storms (*Inf.* xxxiii. 105), because he distinguishes between veins and arteries (*Inf.* i. 90), because he describes a kind of telegraphy (*Inf.* viii. 4), and tells of a constellation which resembles the Southern Cross (*Purg.* i. 23). I have even heard him praised because he managed to keep clear of the eccentricities of his age, and of its prevalent religious superstition. Every age has admired Dante where it could find its own ideals in him, and let him severely alone where it could not. *Lo' Nferigno* and his associates devoted years to the study of the *Divine Comedy* because there were such lovely old words in it; but when better writers, such as Chiabrera and Marini, appeared on the scene, even this source of interest disappeared, and for eighty-seven years (1629-1716) not a single publisher thought it worth while so much as to reprint the Sacred Poem. In the last century the interest in philology revived, and with it a growing interest in those amazing Middle Ages, and ultimately a fastidious delight in elegant

phraseology and a love of epigram. Dante again became a linguistic monument, a fine old fellow who really made his powers and the means at his command go a wonderfully long way, and must be treated with forbearing consideration. As Muratori put it, he was a mine of barbarous erudition. And, moreover, he was the author of a work full of beautiful passages and elegant phrases. Francesca da Rimini and Count Ugolino were models of pathetic expression. According to Biagioli (vol. i. p. x) Dante possessed the further talent of putting ordinary things in a special way. If we add that he was universally admitted to have been a tender and passionate lover and a skilful and diligent man of affairs, we have about exhausted the catalogue of merits usually accorded him. And, for that matter, I cannot deny that even when the poet is thus torn from his true element, and his work utterly bereft of its special and organic vitality, many beauties remain to excite our admiration and offer scope for the activity of the interpreters.

The resonant, exalted speech, the zeal for every lofty sentiment, the sure grip and the fervour of the poetry, all these are integral portions of the beauteous whole, and much can be done towards helping us to appreciate them in the way of correction of the text, explanation of the meaning of difficult words, and amassing of historical matter bearing on the poem. How far this has already been done, I shall point out as I treat of the different heads separately, but first I must mention one more circumstance which prevents the newer commentators as a body from attaining perfection even in this their own particular field. I allude to the unhistorical nature of their treatment. They want to make Dante a modern. One of them, Biagioli, naïvely informs us (vol. i. p. xxiii) that he only looks into himself and his surroundings to find the key to the comprehension of the *Divine Comedy*; and from this

point of view there is of course nothing easier than for the commentator to go into himself, and then put forth any languid inanities which he may chance to find there. But this will not do. Dante does not fly loose in the air, like thistle-down, so that the first projecting bramble may catch and hold him. We cannot beckon to his spirit over half a millennium, and at once see it standing before us. He is firmly rooted in his own place in history, and the seed has grown till its branches spread down ever wider and wider through the centuries. No man, single-handed, can actually regain the position of Dante himself, but each may lay hold of some one of the branches that spring from his grave and climb back upon it.

Numerous commentaries sprang up round the *Divine Comedy* from the earliest times, deriving therefrom whatever life they had; and each of them in consequence embodies some portion of Dante's spirit. Those who have surrendered themselves unreservedly to the poet will soon be taught by their sympathetic affection to recognise the scarlet thread; and the quiet patience which follows faint clues through the darkness of the night will learn with ever growing security to reconstruct the wondrous edifice in all the radiance of its original plan.[1] The recent commentators will have nothing to do with the works of their early predecessors. They are barbarous, tedious, superstitious, and, worst of all, they insist with intolerable emphasis on matters of which the moderns are determined to know nothing! Hence they are discredited, and some even go so far as to pride themselves, like Biagioli, on not having read them, since, as he assures us, they all say the

[1] Dante intended to expound the *Comedy* himself (see The Zatta collected edition, iv. 1, p. 408; small edition, iv. 479). His idea of the requirements of such a commentary will be found on p. 402 [471]. The loss of this projected work is probably due to Can Grande's defeat at Padua. [The reference is to the letter to Can Grande della Scala, § 32 and § 6 *sq.*, in the modern editions.—1869.]

same thing. But now comes the inevitable paradox. Our commentator resolves to put nothing but fresh work of his own into his commentary, but his own early studies will have acquainted him, though only at second or third hand, with the old interpretations, and he will now be unable to set the influence thus brought to bear on his conclusions at naught. So he will unconsciously and involuntarily propagate the old tradition, through the windings of an ever intensifying course of misrepresentation and misunderstanding, until the original truth has been perverted into a string of ridiculous and distorted fabrications. The common curse brought upon us by all superficial compilations is the withdrawal of attention from the existing treasures which they supplant without replacing. Thus each commentator on Dante is influenced by his immediate predecessor, but after Landino the work of the earliest commentators was forgotten; after Venturi the sixteenth-century commentators went the same way; and the latest school, basing their work almost entirely upon Venturi, have in their turn wellnigh crowded him out, and now bear the whole weight of the tradition on their own feeble shoulders, while burying the wisdom of former days in oblivion. Thus it comes that Biagioli has unconsciously adopted Landino's erroneous interpretation of the meaning of the three beasts (*Inf.* i. 32), and of Medusa (*Inf.* ix. 61), although he is innocent of any knowledge of his opinions on hundreds of occasions when they are right; and thus it comes, too, that our commentators often raise a cry of jubilation over a supposed new discovery which had been better and more modestly set forth by the Ancients; and when they in their turn have sunk into the oblivion that surely awaits them, I suppose the same stew will appear and reappear in progressively uninviting réchauffés. For instance, Biagioli's idea that the reference in *Inf.* vi. 73 is to Dante himself and to Guido Cavalcanti appears exactly in the commen-

taries of Boccaccio (vol. ii. p. 14) and Guido del Carmine (in Landino). The account of who it was that Frate Alberigo slew (*Inf.* xxxiii. 118), which De Romanis (vol. i. p. 460) extracts as a brand-new piece of information from the Cassinese MS., is given much better and more completely by Benvenuto da Imola[1] (Muratori, *Antiquitates*, vol. i. p. 1145 *sq.*).[2] It is unfortunately true

[1] It has been shown in the *Jahrbuch der deutschen Dantegesellsch.* i. 275, that the *chiose posteriori* of the editors of the Cassinese MS are merely extracts from Benvenuto. The note here referred to, however, is a *chiosa sincrona*, not borrowed from the work of the Imolese. But the truth is that an account of Alberigo's victims is to be found in pretty well all the earlier commentators.—1869.

[2] I will give two more examples of the confused and blind gropings of the more recent commentators. At the end of the third canto of the *Inferno*, Dante represents Charon as refusing to ferry him across Acheron, while Virgil himself says that none but sinful souls are borne in that wherry. At the beginning of the fourth canto, however, Dante recovers from a swoon to find himself on the opposite bank. The oldest commentators, amongst them Jacopo della Lana and Francesco da Buti, hold that Dante was not conveyed across by Charon, but give no hint what other means may have been employed. Boccaccio, i. 291, understands the whole episode as merely spiritual, so that it could of necessity have no corporeal expression. Landino introduces an angel who miraculously transports Dante during his sleep, and supports his theory by a reference to the lightning and earthquake which Boccaccio takes for infernal manifestations. He is followed essentially by Vellutello and Daniello. *Lo Smarrito* remarked that it must be through modesty that the poet does not expressly refer to the angel and Magalotti (*Com. sui primi 5 canti dell' inf.*, Mil. 1819) further elaborates this idea. Venturi, however, does not preserve the memory of the angel, and Lombardi (on *Inf.* iii. 129) seems disposed to take Dante over in Charon's boat. Then Biagioli resuscitates the angel, adding with unsurpassable naïveté: 'No one, till now, has ever given his mind to the solution of this mystery.'—The second example is from *Purg.* ix. 1. In the preceding canto (line 49) Dante has mentioned the evening twilight; now, he says, 'the concubine of old Tithonus was gleaming white on the balcony of the orient, forth from the arms of her sweet friend'; then, after sleeping a while, he is borne up to the gate of Purgatory in the morning dawn (ix. 52).—The old commentators understand by the *concubina di Titone* the bright gleam which precedes the moonrise, and Jacopo della Lana records a fable completely justifying the name, which, though not handed down from the Ancients, is quite in the spirit of the expansions which the myths of antiquity received at the hands of the

that the greater part of these old treasures still lies buried in MSS. and rare editions,[1] but an editor or commentator ought not to consider them inaccessible, and at any rate

Middle Ages. Landino, Daniello, and Venturi follow him. The later commentators stumble over the lunar aurora. Velutello explains '*fronte*' as 'end' [?]. It is three in the morning [?], and the glow of the dawn has extended into the Scorpion. He is followed, with slight modifications, by Volpi, Lombardi, and Poggiali. Rosa Morando also has a hankering for the glow of dawn, and so interprets the '*freddo animale*,' in which the aurora is said to be visible, as the Fishes, not the Scorpion. Perazzini, in a pamphlet on the subject (*Veronæ ap. M. Moroni*, 1775) takes the whole description [as the *Ottimo Commento* had done long before him] as referring not to the Mount of Purgatory, but to Italy (45° distant from Jerusalem), which would make it 9 P.M. in the spot where Dante is. Dionisi, *Anedd.* iv. p. 57, holds the same view. Ang. Costanzo (*Lettera*, pp. 60-66) defends the lunar aurora with good, but not exhaustive, arguments. For the moderns, however, anything like a calculation is too laborious, and they call it 'dawn' without more ado. A star-table, which is not hard to prepare, shows that on that evening the moon would rise at about 9 P.M. in Purgatory, and that her glow would appear in the tail of the Scorpion at 8.30 P.M.

[1] Originally a note was appended to this passage enumerating thirteen early commentators, and giving MSS. in which their works were to be found. A group of anonymous commentators, most of them simply gloss-writers, was added as No. 14. In addition to these was a list of ten early commentators, known at second-hand by references made to them. In 1824 such a list might have a certain value, now [1869] it would be mere waste-paper. Of these thirteen, one (Jacopo della Lana) had been printed long ago (in 1477 and 1478), and has been re-issued lately (1865 and 1866). Three of the remaining twelve (that of the Archbishop Giov. Visconti's 'six scholars,' that of Domenico Aretino, and that attributed to Petrarch) have been shown not to be independent commentaries. The same may be said of Giov. Ser Cambi, one of those known by citation only. Six have appeared in print since 1824, when the article was written, for three of which six—those attributed to Jacopo di Dante (1848) and Petrus Dantis (1845) and the pseudo-Boccaccio (1846)—we are indebted to the untiring liberality of Lord Vernon.

The Ottimo has been edited by Torri (1827-29), Francesco da Buti's commentary by Crescentino Giannini (1858-62), and finally Giov. Tamburini has issued Benvenuto da Imola (1855-56), though only in Italian extracts. Fanfani has at any rate begun the publication of the excellent anonymous commentary in the Riccardian Library. In 1848 Lord Vernon issued another, bearing the date 1328, and Selmi a third in 1865. Of the glossators, during the same period, the Cassinese was printed in 1865, and in 1838 Zacheroni produced the work of commentator, mentioned in my list as known only at second-hand,

Landino, Boccaccio, and Benvenuto da Imola have been printed in recent times, or are easily obtainable. Cristoforo Landino (1481)[1] drew chiefly upon Boccaccio (he is

Guiniforte Bargigi. Of the other nine whom I mentioned as known only by the references made to them, one, Vincenzo Buonanni, who belongs to the second half of the sixteenth century, and whose commentary on the *Inferno* had long been printed (1572), was counted amongst early commentators by mistake. Then the mythical Fra Ilario di Monte Corvo certainly never wrote a commentary at all. Michino da Mezzano would seem only to have written introductory headings to the *Divine Comedy*, and not a continuous commentary. Finally, Martino Paolo Novarese has no business in the list, for he is no other than Nidobeato, the celebrated publisher of the poem. Of the commentaries enumerated in my note, therefore, there remain, not counting the more or less dubious anonymi, those of Ser Graziolo de' Bambagioli, Chancellor of Bologna, Fra Guido del Carmine Pisano, Fra Giovanni da Serravalle, Fra Ricardo Carmelitano, Andrea Napolitano, and Fra Accorso Bonfantini Francescano. Of the last we only know through a doubtful quotation of Mehus; and of the two that precede only through references to them in Nidobeato's preface, and through their mention by Landino. As far as known there are no extant MSS. of them. But the two first, who were Dante's contemporaries, are of much higher importance. I thought I had identified the commentary of Ser Graziolo in a Florentine MS. (Laurentian, Pl. xl. 7). See the *Antologia*, No. cxxviii. p. 151 (1831), but I cannot deny the weight of the arguments urged against me, especially by Piccioli (*Ant.* No. cxxx. p. 139). De Batines (*Bibl. Dant.*, ii. 2, p. 298) thought he had discovered a large part of this commentary and of Fra Guido's (which according to Buti, *Inf.* vi. 73, only dealt with twenty-seven cantos of the *Inferno*) in a MS. of Lord Vernon's. In any case they exist in two MSS. in the Colombine Library in Seville (Nos. 22 and 24). Ever since I received authentic information of this many years ago, I have spared no pains to obtain more detailed information, and if possible transcripts; but unfortunately without success. A German man of letters who had undertaken the task reported that his notes had been lost on the return journey, by the fault, I think, of a Custom-house official. May others have better luck! It is certain that a transcript of Ser Graziolo's work would be far more valuable than much which has been published in this branch of literature.—Of the other commentators the Anonymus of the Ambrosiana (198 C. *pars inf.*) of 1355, which was unknown to me at the time of writing the article, would be particularly valuable if printed.—1869.

Since 1869 we have had editions of Benvenuto da Imola (complete Latin text in five volumes; edited by Philippo Lacaita, at the expense of Mr. Vernon, 1887), of Johannes de Serravalle (1891), and of Graziolo de' Bambagioli (edited by Antonio Fiammazzo, 1892).—ED.

[1] For further particulars of this commentator and his work see

quoted six times in sixteen cantos), and where this source fails, from Benvenuto da Imola (quoted five times in the thirty-four cantos of the *Inferno*), and, with regard to the allegory, from Francesco da Buti (quoted three times in the *Inferno*). He seems, in spite of his assurances to the contrary, to have added very little original matter, except a number of scholastic definitions and distinctions, a few notes on mythological points, the remark, repeated *ad nauseam* (compare his own note on *Inf.* xxv. 44), that Virgil signifies the higher, Dante the lower reason, and a few declamatory passages. The main value of his commentary lies, beyond doubt, in his assiduous study of the profound work of Francesco da Buti. The latter was born only eight years after the poet's death, and his explanations may be looked on as particularly trustworthy. Landino's work will remain indispensable, mainly on this account, as long as Buti's commentary remains unprinted.—Of the three works mentioned above as easily accessible, Landino's has retained the firmest hold. But even he is dipped into at random and disconnectedly, so that no critical sense has been acquired for the different value of the various aspects of his work, and he is cited as an authority where his lead has no significance (*e.g.* in the establishment of the text,[1] and grammatical exegesis), with just as much confidence as where it is sufficient alone to drive all the later commentators off the field.

Boccaccio's commentary, as every one knows, only deals with the first sixteen cantos. It is in substance the MS. of

Bandini, *Specimen. liter. Flor. saec. xv.* (Flor. 1747), pp. 126-143. The Florentine Signoria presented him with an estate near Borgo alla Collina in the Cassentino, in consideration of his services. He died there at the age of eighty in 1504 and his body, in wonderful preservation, is still shown in the church there.—1869.

[1] The *Prolegomeni Critici* to my Berlin edition of the *Divine Comedy* contain (p. xii) a more favourable and better founded judgment on Landino's services in establishing the text.—1869.

the lectures on the *Comedy* which he delivered in his sixtieth year. And we must always bear this in mind when studying the work, where the novelist, now in his old age, expatiates in the ample fields of his mythological knowledge, and takes occasion to lament the customs of his golden youth and the deterioration of the present day. At the same time the evidence of the book is conclusive in questions of idiom, and when he does not fall into poetic embellishments (as he always does in matters affecting Dante's person), his descriptions of customs and events, given from the standpoint of an approximate contemporary, are very vivid. The grammatical and allegorical explanations seem to be derived from tradition in a great measure, and the writer's profound love of Dante seems now and again to open the way to a deeper understanding of the meaning of the text, however alien the real bent of his genius may be from its spirit. This commentary has only been printed once,[1] but it is easy to get. Baldelli and others bestow great and even exaggerated praise on Boccaccio, but Venturi, Lombardi, and Poggiali have made as good as no use of him. In Biagioli I find him referred to eight times in all, thrice to explain single words (*rabbuffa*, *spelta*, and *voce*), once, in a similar case, to contradict him (wrongly), *Inf.* xiv. 4. Once he is unconsciously cited (*Inf.* xiii. 151). Twice he is made to rehearse well-known information (*Inf.* x. 52, and xv. 67), and once (*Inf.* iii. 60) he is appealed to as affording conclusive proof on a point concerning which he himself says 'the which thing I neither deny nor affirm.' And yet his commentary furnishes matter to the purpose at every point, as I shall have

[1] Florence (more properly Naples), 1724, 2 vols.—Since 1824 have appeared an edition by Ign. Moutier, 1831-32, and a more compendious one by Fraticelli, 1844, both in 3 vols. A still more recent and much superior edition (Florence, 1863) has been prepared by Milanesi.—1869.

occasion to show by a few conspicuous examples in the course of this essay.

Only extracts of Benvenuto da Imola's work, containing the passages of historical interest,[1] have been printed (Muratori, *op. cit.* pp. 1028-1298), and hence it comes that some of the passages quoted by Landino (*e.g. Inf.* vii. 61 and ix. 66) and others are not to be found in Muratori's transcript.[2] It has been established, however, that the chief value of Benvenuto's commentary lies in its historical notes, and he is distinguished from his friend and contemporary Boccaccio, in that he does not base them on a fluctuating tradition, but on thorough researches of his own, thereby approximating in this, as in his other works, to the position of a regular historian. These characteristics have long given him a high place in the estimation of historians; and Italian scholars, in especial, delight to refer to him as an author of singular trustworthiness. But, strangely enough, the Dante commentators have not yet seen fit to accord him a like honour, and up to the present day I have but seldom found a reference to him in the works of modern commentators.[3]

Having pointed out this general defect, I must now proceed to a few remarks on the treatment of special

[1] Mehus, *Vita Ambrosii Camaldulensis*, pp. clii, clxxxii, calls this selection 'careless' and 'bad.'

[2] Tamburini's Italian extracts have already been referred to; see p. 26. In my *Proleg. Critic.*, p. lviii, I was compelled to indorse the severe judgment of the American scholar Charles Eliot Norton on this work; and I am quite of the same mind still.—1869.

The full Latin text is now published. See p. 27, *note*.—ED.

[3] He is cited by Lombardi on *Purg.* xxx. 36 [?], *Par.* xii. 83, xvii. 61, and by his new editor on *Purg.* xiv. 100, xxiv. 30, *Par.* xvi. 109. [On *Purg.* xxiv. 135, Lombardi, who lived and wrote at Rome, quotes Benvenuto merely on the authority of the Lucchese Venturi, although in the *Vatican* and the *Barberini* libraries between them he might have found three MSS. of Benvenuto himself. One of the special merits of Streckfuss's translation is that the profound Dante student Uhden communicated many passages from Muratori's excerpts from Benvenuto to the notes on the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso*.—1869.]

points, and shall begin with the question of the establishment of the text.[1]

The whole period during which the *Divine Comedy* was transmitted by MS. alone does not extend to more than about a century and a half, and consequently it presents no such serious corruptions and disfigurements as we find in the Classics, which had to subsist through long periods during which no one was capable of understanding them. Dante wrote in the language of the people, and we may safely suppose that no scribe could be entirely without intelligent interest in his work, and this is why most [?] of the MSS. are wellnigh as legible as a printed book. But the same agencies tended to bring down the text of the *Comedy* nearer to the level of the copyists. The poet's pregnant, sometimes far-fetched, phrases passed their comprehension, and struck them as mistakes; for it never occurred to them that what was outside their comprehension might yet be within the meaning of the text. So we get a succession of unconscious conjectural emendations, smoothing down and flattening out the diction of the poem.[2] These 'dampers,' as it were, under which the strings of Dante's orchestra had to vibrate, as best they might, began to be applied early in the fourteenth century, for the causes that led to their application were already at work, and [*fama* for *infamia*, *mondo* for *modo*, *arme* for *arnie*], *altre* for *alte*, *conlui* for *colui*, etc. etc., soon become quite common substitutions. The discovery of printing served to extend the knowledge of the poem

[1] This subject has been treated at length in the *Prolegomen. Critici* already referred to.—1869.

[2] Coluccio Salutati, in the fourteenth century, wrote 'quae, quum communis calamitas sit, in hoc libro latius obrepsit et copiosius, quoniam vulgares et imperiti perite non possunt, quae periti fecerunt, exemplare' (in Mehus, *op. cit.* p. clxxix)—*and this common plague has worked deeper and wider devastation in this book than in others, for the common unskilled folk cannot skilfully copy what the skilled have done.*

(1472), but most of the early editions are printed from the first text that came to hand, with very little regard to its value.

The business of the critic, then, is to examine the oldest MSS., and, with the aid of the early commentaries, to expunge the facile readings, and endeavour to cultivate a sense for the Dantesque diction which shall aid him in recognising the poet's original phraseology. To allow universal suffrage to the MSS. and then fix the text by a majority of votes is obviously futile. In principle the authors of the Manzani edition (1595) followed a sound method. They made an elaborate comparison of upwards of ninety MSS., and evolved therefrom a text (known as the Cruscan), which differs very considerably from the printed text of former editions. But they are accused, not without reason, of a certain bias towards the Aldine edition[1] (1502), and with an obstinate adherence to certain rules of their own, such as hard apostrophes; and, worst of all, the requisite sense for Dante's special characteristics is only too clearly absent.[2] Consequently, although they have succeeded in great measure in banishing the facile readings of the middle period, they have also displaced many true readings, or at any rate failed to recognise, among many variants, the *one* which bears the stamp of truth, and have consequently retained some clerical error in its place.[3]

After their labours the easier readings which they rightly rejected can obviously have no further interest for us. What remains for the critics is to test the selection of the Crusca, and by help of the most trustworthy MSS. to improve on their choice in special passages, and substitute some still better reading. And this has been in the main the spirit

[1] On which Vellutello had pronounced a severe judgment on the second page of his Preface.

[2] e.g. *Inf.* xviii. 12, xxii. 111, xxxiv. 113; *Par.* ii. 8.

[3] Dionisi, *Aneddoto*, iv. p. 169, passes a severe, but just, sentence on this work.

of Lombardi's and Dionisi's work. Lombardi (1791) observed that the Nidobeatine of 1477 excelled all the other fifteenth-century editions in the care and thoroughness with which the text had been treated; and he frequently defended its readings against those of the Crusca very successfully, but often also with a certain narrowness and bias. Dionisi, the acutest of Dante critics, made special use of a MS. in the Library of Sante Croce, but compared many others with it. This careful examination of MSS. was happily combined with marvellously skilful and cautious conjectural emendation, and has probably brought his text into closest proximity to the original.[1]

But instead of making use of this excellent work, Biagioli, with ludicrous obstinacy, followed the Crusca in almost every instance, while De Romanis has adhered almost literally to the Nidobeatine. Meanwhile the learned Poggiali, who had more than thirty Dante MSS. in his possession, had published selected variants from one of them—a very excellent one—in his magnificent edition (Livorno, 1807-13, 4 vols.). The later editors have seen fit to follow this precedent. Thus, a Stuart MS. has been collated in behoof of Biagioli's edition, and De Romanis gives the variants of the Cassinese, Caetani, Vatican, Angelica, Antaldi, and Chigi MSS. Unfortunately, however, neither the manuscripts themselves nor the variants selected from

[1] The results of these researches were first published in the second and fourth numbers of the *Aneddoti* (1786, 90), and were then collected in the Bodoni *édition de luxe* of the *Comedy* (1795, fol.), elegantly reproduced by Bettoni in Brescia (1810, 32mo). Dionisi often changed his judgments, and addenda appear as late as in his *Preparazione storica* (1807).—Biagioli pronounces a silly and narrow judgment on his work in a note to *Inf.* xxxiv. 87 [cf. De Romanis, *Purg.* xxii. 106]; and indeed Italian and German students alike deserve emphatic reproof for having practically made no use of Dionisi's long and successful labours. Lombardi knows his work, and is often dishonourable enough to adopt his readings without any kind of reference to their source. To the later editors he is as good as unknown. Cf. for example De Romanis on *Par.* xxvi. 33.

them are well chosen, and the notes are crowded with readings which for the most part are the very ones which previous and more skilful critics have taken consummate pains to expunge from the text, and which may be found, more or less as they stand, in any one of the earlier editions. I think I am fully justified in saying that this unwieldy mass of variants is not only exceedingly cumbrous, but also absolutely useless. But the best of it is that the editors themselves do not seem to have expected any valuable results from their labours, else they would not have neglected, on due occasion,[1] to appeal to Poggiali's variants, which are beyond question the most valuable of them all [?], in support of the readings which they themselves adopt. A comparison of Poggiali and De Romanis on *Inf.* x. 1, xiv. 126, xvii. 124, xxxi. 19, will afford glaring examples of this neglect. Still worse, De Romanis is so full of the blind animus of his predecessor that he entirely neglects Dionisi's readings, and even Lombardi's recension cannot save him from the sin of tiros in criticism, viz., the bold insertion in his text of wretched variants which occur in MSS. he has himself examined (cf., for example, *Inf.* ii. 4, xv. 29, xvii. 76).

But perhaps I have already dwelt too long on textual criticism. I now turn to exegesis. This is pre-eminently the happy hunting-ground of caprice and ignorance. Here you may bandy arguments up and down to the heart's content, and go round and round the dreary circle of possible and impossible interpretations without forwarding the true comprehension of the poet by one hair's-breadth. For this purpose, at any rate, every passage is considered in complete isolation, and there seems no reason why one should not have one's opinion on it without so much as having seen the work in which it occurs. Indeed there has

[1] See, however, De Romanis, *Inf.* ix. 54, xv. 86 [xix. 12, xxix. 36; *Purg.* viii. 86, xvii. 95, xix. 22, 55, 110, xxii. 79].

never been a period so prolific as the present in articles on the signification of isolated passages or verses from Dante (cf. the literature on *Inf.* vii. 1, xxxi. 67; *Par.* xxvi. 134);[1] and the notes of the Commentators stand in much the same detachment from each other, and from the poem as a whole. This very incoherency makes it difficult to characterise the Commentaries; for I cannot discover and follow any definite direction at all in this ocean of talk. I will however endeavour to give one or two indications of the lines recently taken. Lombardi has the merit of great love for the poet, coupled with untiring diligence. He is glad to avail himself of Venturi's predecessors in explaining the meaning of the text; he supports his exposition more fully than do any of the rest by references to standard linguistic works; and we may fairly say that in this respect he has made a pretty full use of Landino, Vellutello, and Daniello, even—to his credit be it spoken—when they lead him to conclusions differing from those of Venturi. The number of his original interpretations is not really great, and they mostly concern matters of minor importance; and unhappily there is no denying that they are generally hopelessly wrong, and give a strange impression of a man of contracted ideas, bent on having an opinion of his own. The snarling polemic against the Crusca, Venturi, and Dionisi (where the latter is not entirely ignored, as in *Purg.* xxiv. 37, 43), often strike a level quite below the dignity of the subject; and moreover the unprovoked attacks on Dionisi are almost always unhappy.[2] Nevertheless Lombardi's commentary deserves the universal approval that has greeted it both at home and

[1] Since I wrote the above, matters have gone from bad to worse. Only think, by way of warning, of '*il piè fermo sempre era 'l più basso*' (*Inf.* i. 30), or that unfortunate '*sugger dette*' (*Inf.* v. 59) or '*Poscia più che 'l dolor potè 'l digiuno*' (*Inf.* xxxiii. 75).—1869.

[2] The best examples will be found in the *Esame delle correzioni*, etc., on pp. lxx-lxxxiv of the edition by De Romanis.

abroad as the most painstaking and diligent of the works on the subject, and the one most serviceable for immediate purposes.

Lombardi's Commentary was followed in 1807 by Poggiali's, to which I have repeatedly referred already. It contains still fewer original opinions, is still more suited to the wants of the beginner, but is totally lacking in real research, has a repelling and prosaic trick of paraphrasing, and is published in an inconvenient form, in two volumes separate from the text, with the verses unnumbered.

Biagioli teaches Italian in Paris, and makes no secret of having written in the first instance for Frenchmen who are beginning their studies of Italian literature. So he has prejudices to combat. Voltaire made fun of Dante, and Biagioli has to prove that he did the poet injustice. This motive pervades the whole work. It seldom contains anything too stiff for the hour's lesson, and is, in fact, one wordy panegyric from end to end. To bring out the beauties (in the narrow sense in which alone they can come into consideration here) he begins by taking Alfieri's private copy and pointing out all the lines that the tragedian scored; and although verse after verse is thus noted, he adopts no conventional sign, but writes out 'Alfieri nota' at full length every time. Then, in the next place, he adds innumerable, elaborate, and oft-repeated exclamations, which certainly do every credit to his own susceptibility, but would hardly serve the purpose of communicating the inspiration, to one who has no perception of Dante's beauties on his own account. For example, *Purg.* xxviii. 1: 'Prepare, O reader, to look upon the divine beauties which the poet is about to display before you. Alfieri, whose glance naught beautiful could escape, has scored the whole of this canto except twenty-eight verses, which we shall point out as they occur. So I will waste no time in calling attention to the special beauties,

all of which appear to me meet for the Paradise which he is describing. But whosoever is wont to feed on tares let him not hope to gather in the harvest with which this ample champaign waves.'—The author prides himself on the entire originality of his interpretations. I have already criticised him for at any rate bestowing very little attention on the earlier interpreters; but nevertheless we generally find him repeating just those remarks of his predecessors which lie most upon the surface; and, what is worse, attacking others, which are often quite insignificant, at a length and with an arrogance altogether disproportionate to the subject, and in a way quite unsuitable to the wants of students. The unseemly and sometimes vulgar style which characterises his attacks—in themselves often quite unjustified—on so meritorious a writer as Lombardi, for instance, must greatly injure his book; and in fact it makes it almost unreadable. Monti has already criticised it severely, and the author himself now seems (vol. ii. p. iii) to regret it.[1] Examples are found on every page, e.g. *Inf.* x. 1, xv. 29, xxxiii. 80; *Purg.* xxii. 37, xxx. 15. His own opinions, on the other hand, he puts forward with a supreme complacency which would ill become him even if he had hit on a really new and illuminating conception. Biagioli seldom produces a novel interpretation without a contemptuous glance at his predecessors, or at least a passing *nota bene* addressed to the

[1] I cannot flatter myself that Sig. Biagioli will pay equal attention to my strictures, or even deem these pages worthy of a passing glance; such is the opinion which he very candidly expresses on the merits of us poor ultramontanes in his preface to the *Paradiso*, p. x: 'Since the author's meaning has not hitherto been revealed to any Italian savant, we may safely conclude that no foreigner has been able to see it even "like a mole through skin."' This is kindly said; but meanwhile we foreigners have at least got so far as not to follow a certain Italian savant in ascribing to the elder Michael Angelo Buonarotti a lecture signed by the Cruscan *nom-de-plume* of his younger namesake (l'Impastato). Cf. Biagioli, *Rime di M. Ang. Buon. il vecchio* (Paris, 1821), p. xxx and p. 293.

reader. And as a matter of fact these novelties are generally concerned with matters of the very smallest significance, and have as good as no bearing on the comprehension of the poem as a whole. I may instance the explanations of three passages from the first half of the *Inferno* upon which Biagioli lays special weight. In *Inf.* iv. 68 he opines that the sages of the Limbo had no actual fire in their midst, but that a light glow hovered around the walls (!); in xii. 113 he declares that the real reason why Dante turned to Virgil was not because he was bewildered, but because he doubted the truth of what Nessus had told him (?); in xiv. 83 he remarks that the dykes of the blood-red streamlet were not built up of tufa, but had been constructed by the infernal architect from the beginning.—If we look for something to praise in this Commentator our nearest resource will be his fairly accurate knowledge of Dante's other writings, especially the *Convivio* and *Vita Nuova*.

De Romanis has almost completely refrained from explanations of his own, but has followed Costanzo in citing the Scholia of the Cassinese manuscript, defending and explaining them (as well as a few variants), often with much knowledge. In the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* he gives a fairly accurate account of all that can be regarded as significant in Biagioli's Commentary [in the *Paradiso* he only does so in exceptional cases, for instance in xxi. 122, xxiv. 18], and in spite of its want of courtesy towards himself, he shows a praiseworthy, though perhaps exaggerated, impartiality in dealing with it, sometimes degenerating into weakness, and a want of spirit in defence of Lombardi.

Next comes the Bolognese edition (1819-1821) in quarto, with scandalously bad copper-plates and a meagre and insignificant Commentary by Paolo Costa, one peculiarity of which may be referred to again below.

Finally, Colelli's *Illustrazioni*, chiefly designed to correct

and complete the Bolognese edition just named, and written in a one-sided and perverse vein, will be dealt with more fully hereafter. This work goes further than any of the rest I have mentioned in the direction of ignorant and flabby chatter, which very often has not the remotest connection with the matter in hand. See, for example, pages 28-33. Moreover, the author takes a very lofty tone. If the lines I am writing should ever reach Rieti, I would ask Colelli's leave to apply his own words (page 42), and cry, 'When a man undertakes to supplant a good note by a bad and erroneous one, the fault seems unpardonable.' After the *Inferno* no more of this work appeared, which leads to the conclusion that in Italy itself it found no support.

I must now redeem my pledge of showing what has been done in the way of interpretation of historical allusions. I shall have something to say as to the form and something as to the matter.

I have already remarked—and the progress of this essay will soon justify me—that Dante's poem is rooted in history. Isolated threads connect it loosely with the affairs of antiquity. It takes a stronger hold of Charles and his Paladins; and draws a full life out of the vivid energy and chivalry of the thirteenth century, and more immediately from the freethinking Tuscany and the flourishing and turbulent Florence. With its strongly marked individuality it takes its stand in the present, chooses its part decisively; defies, implores, exhorts; and gazes wistfully, in fear and hope, and often with prophetic glance, out into the future.—If we are to grasp this life and keep our hold of it, surely we must 'take it in its own element.' A definite conception of history, correspondent to that which gave the poem birth, must prepare the way for the first line of the *Divine Comedy*, and

must provide the background on which it can display its majestic form. A few firm strokes must set forth the genesis of the mediæval spirit, the cleavage of the several peoples and states, and their relations to each other, and then in more detail the rise and development of the freedom of the Lombard and Tuscan cities. Thus we must be introduced into the deepening drama of the decisive conflict of political opinions, the sweep of the universal struggle, the detail of private feuds, the perpetual succession of revolutions, the changing constitutions, and the special events and features of Dante's own day, until 'in the middle of the path of life' the reader might actually be living in the year 1300.—Such a propædeutic[1] would enable us to dispense with hundreds of notes below the text in which the same history is often given three times over in disconnected fragments, (for example the account of Buondelmonti, *Inf.* vi. 80, xxviii. 106, and *Par.* xvi. 140). Surely a connected introduction of this kind would help the reader more than the system that leaves him in ignorance who Manfred's daughter was and whom she married until he reads the notes on the third canto of the *Purgatory*. Unfortunately

[1] Unhappily such a propædeutic, which would unquestionably form the best means of preparation for understanding Dante, is still wanting. Ferrazzi's *Enciclopedia Dantesca* (1865) merely collects material (with a mass of alien matter), and does not attempt to work it up. Arrivabene's *Secolo di Dante* (first published in 1823, and repeatedly since) may be admitted to cover the historical portion of the field pretty fully. But it is a dull compilation, and quite uncritical. Carlo Troya was far better equipped for the performance of the task (*Veltro Allegorico*, 1826, and *Veltro Alleg. de' Ghibellini*, 1856); but it is much to be regretted that he clings obstinately to an untenable hypothesis, and his defective references make it difficult or impossible to check his assertions. On the whole, Wegele's biography of the poet (1852 and 1865) is the best guide; but it only deals with Dante's own fortunes. —1869.

Villari's *First Two Centuries of Florentine History*, and Selfe and Wicksteed's extracts from Villani's *Florentine Chronicles*, are amongst the more recent attempts to supply this want.—Ed.

there is as yet no book that meets this demand. Giovanni Gasparo Orelli's excellent *Cronichette*, though not proposing to do anything of the sort, comes nearest doing it, in virtue of its happily graduated fulness of treatment, its concentration upon Dante's period, and especially its successful and dramatic interweaving of touches fresh from the life supplied by contemporary writers. Unfortunately I have not the necessary historical knowledge for passing an unbiassed judgment upon this book, and in any case this would not be the place for doing so; but the respected author promises us a complete German introduction to the *Divine Comedy*, and I am sure many others join with me in the eager hope that we may find in it just the historical prelude we desire. But, in any case, if such an introduction as I have indicated is to fulfil its purpose, it must take special count of one marked characteristic of the age in general and of Dante's genius in particular; I mean its religious pre-occupation. The rise and activity of St. Francis and St. Dominic, the Thomist reconstruction of theology and the contemporary consolidation of the hierarchy, and the attitude of the period towards the Albigenses and other heretics, must be brought into special prominence. Yet though we should desire such an introduction to be written in the Ghibelline spirit, as the *Cronichette* is, inasmuch as Dante himself was a Ghibelline, yet I should doubt (*Inf.* x. 119 and xiii. 72) whether the latter's party spirit would have inspired such uniformly favourable judgments as Orelli's on Frederick II.

Such a treatment as is here indicated is, however, incompatible with the form of a Commentary which must of necessity give its narrative in a disconnected and occasional form as the passages to which it has to attach itself present themselves. Yet we may at least require the Commentator to have gained some connected historical knowledge himself, and to put his reader in a position to connect each

separate event with the general march of events. Unfortunately, the Commentators in too many cases never heard a word of mediæval history until they came to study Dante; and their progress in this branch of knowledge is often almost entirely limited (as Biagioli himself admits to be his own case, vol. i. p. xxxvii) to the range of material provided by their predecessors in the same occasional style. The dictionary form now so dominant in Italy encourages even those who desire some further information to content themselves with turning over the pages of some such book as Moreri's historical dictionary, so that their historical information still flutters about in their brains as disconnected as ever. For example, neither Lombardi nor Biagioli gives his reader any idea [?] that the battle referred to in *Inf.* xxxii. 81 is the same that is mentioned in *Inf.* x. 86 and xvi. 41, so that if the student has no independent knowledge of history he will make pathetic efforts to remember that the Florentine Guelfs suffered a defeat in the Val d'Arbia and another at Monte Aperto. The notes on *Inf.* xii. 119 are quite a study. The passage refers to the murder at Viterbo (1271) of Prince Henry, son of Richard of Cornwall, on his return from the Crusade, by Guy of Montfort, son of Simon Duke of Leicester, and Vicar of Charles I. of Anjou, king of the Two Sicilies. Lombardi makes out that the murdered man was the old king, Henry III. Biagioli makes him a Prince Henry, son of Henry III., who never existed. Vellutello makes him the brother of Prince Edward and son of King Richard of England!! And all the while Benvenuto da Imola had long ago related the history quite correctly, though not without some confusion; and even Boccaccio [?] (vol. ii. pp. 301 *sq.*) and Landino are guilty of none of these frightful blunders.[1] —I know of very few examples in which the modern Com-

[1] All the more recent Commentators have the true account here.—1869.

mentators have drawn on the stores of their own historical information to explain any difficult passages of the poem. One such instance is to be found in Lombardi's note on *Inf.* xxii. 88, and another in Biagioli's on *Inf.* xxviii. 135, although in the latter case Benvenuto's contrary opinion ought to have been considered.

If the limits are drawn so closely, surely we may reasonably expect the data of the early Commentators to be made full use of; but not even this is done. Landino has been drawn upon more freely than the rest, but some of the examples already given will suffice to show how many corrections even he might have supplied. I have already mentioned that Boccaccio is almost entirely neglected in this respect, and yet he is the only one who gives with any completeness the beautiful story of Francesca da Rimini (vol. i. pp. 476 *sq.*) and the account of Pietro delle Vigne's death (vol. ii. pp. 333 *sq.*), and much besides. I need not repeat that Benvenuto has been left untouched, and will merely mention as specimens some of the passages of the *Inferno* on which he would have thrown fresh light (viii. 46, x. 87, xxiii. 108, xxiv. 125, 145, xxvii. 27, 88 *sq.*, xxviii. 16, 55, 73, xxix. 123, xxx. 40, xxxii. 69, 121).

Specially important to the historical comprehension of Dante is an acquaintance with the circumstances of his own life, and it is surely a bad sign that the new Commentators content themselves with reprinting the existing lives of him. It is all the pleasanter to hail the appearance of a book like the Life of Dante which forms a part of Orelli's *Cronichette* already mentioned. It speaks throughout of love and true comprehension of the subject, a clear view and a vivid realisation of the whole period, great diligence and clear insight supporting well-grounded individual opinions; and it must also be regarded as no small merit in the author that he has drawn a great number of his data from the works of Dionisi; for in this, as in other respects, this

writer's wealth of research has hitherto been allowed to lie almost unused and unnoticed. I hope the author will find in the following brief notes sufficient evidence of the careful consideration I have given his book.

One of the reasons why so thick a veil hangs over Dante's life is that every groundless report has been copied from one writer to another without the least attempt being made to test its truth. This is too often the way in Italy. Moreover, Boccaccio, our poet's earliest biographer, sets to work in a truly Alexandrine fashion, and, like his models, frequently invents facts with a view to clothing them in sounding rhetoric and appending declamatory reflections to them; as in the case of his accusing Dante of wantonness, an accusation, of which Orelli very properly takes no heed.[1]

Our author attempts, after the example of Pelli and Dionisi to base his statements as far as possible on Dante's own intimations, and on contemporaneous history and documents; and so, one after another, the absurdities attributed to Dante disappear. On page 18, for instance, we are at last informed of the sufficiently obvious fact that Dante did *not* change his politics out of disgust at his exile. On page 10 the numerous amours which have been attributed to the poet are thrown aside, as they had already been by Dionisi. Boccaccio's silly gossip about Dante's unhappiness with his wife (which Landino spins out still further in his *Vita e costumi*), and about his unbounded political importance and his numerous embassies, is refuted (pp. 13 and 17), and in place of the latter the authenticated embassies to Naples and S. Geminiano

[1] Todeschini, Imbriani, Bartoli, Scartazzini, and Kraus represent a strong reaction against this uncritical credulity in Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. The danger now seems to be an uncritical incredulity. Dr. Witte's own matured and deliberate views on the degree of confidence we may repose in Boccaccio's narrative will be found on pp. 222 *sq.* of this volume.—ED.

appear, although note 152 still reposes too much faith in the old biographer. On p. 3 Dante's acquaintance with Greek is rightly denied, although better grounds for the denial might have been alleged, the most conclusive being that Dante (*Amoroso Convivio*, ii. 15) was wholly at a loss to judge between two divergent translations of Aristotle. A veritable monument of futility may be found in Biagioli's defence of the opposite opinion (note on *Inf.* xiv. 134). In opposition to Pelli (*Zatta*, iv. 2, p. 82 [v. 96]) it is shown on page 24 that Dante probably had no share in the attack on Florence in 1304 [?]; and from p. 37 onwards the obscure history of the later years of Dante's exile are unfolded very clearly on the foundation of Dionisi's work. Where there is so much accuracy I could have wished that nothing resting on a questionable basis had been admitted, such as the statement on p. 25 that the Canzone '*Amor, dacchè convien*' was composed on the Carrarese coast, whereas Vanetti, without much better grounds, assigns it to the Valle Lagarina (*Zatta*, iv. 2, pp. 141-168). It would be much better to have left the question alone. On p. 34, on the authority of a single manuscript, which Pelli had already followed (see De Romanis, *Div. Com.*, vol. i. p. xli), Dante is said,[1] without any qualification, once to have stayed in Toscanella.[2] On page 49 it is asserted, I know not on what authority, that Dante himself collected his *Rime*. I cannot believe it; for (as I shall have to point out presently) even the Canzoni which were to have formed part of the *Amoroso Convivio* are nowhere to be found in the original order,

[1] I have this moment read in the *Morgenbladt* (1823, p. 1000) that Viviani's latest researches have established [?] that Dante made a long stay with the patriarch Torriano in Friuli. See Pelli in Zatta, iv. 2, p. 98 [v. 114].

[2] The discovery of the Latin text of the letter to the Emperor Henry has made it certain that both it and the letter of denunciation and exhortation addressed to the Florentines were dated, not from Toscanella, but from the upper valley of the Arno.—1869.

and the MSS. differ too widely in their ascriptions of the several poems to Dante to admit of the supposition that an authentic collection by the poet himself was in existence. This is why it is so difficult to sever the genuine from the spurious poems, and why it can only be done at all by a close study of Dante and the fine sense for his form which it cultivates. For instance I suspect the Psalms and the Credo [. . . .], which Boccaccio does not include in his carefully compiled list of Dante's works, and which assume such varied forms in the manuscripts as to lose all resemblance.[1] Finally I must utter a modest doubt as to the letter of Fra Ilario given on p. 70, after Mehus (*Vita Ambrosii Camald.* cccxxi.), although I can form no judgment of the Laurentian manuscript (xix. 8, p. 131), from which it is taken.[2] The Dedication to Uguccione, Dante's sudden appearance, his unexplained confidence in the monk, all have a legendary and fictitious air. Then follow reports, or even arguments, just as they appear in Boccaccio's untrustworthy biography. There is not a single touch added. Even the two and a half lines of the Latin version reappear exactly as he gives them. It

[1] Further remarks on this question, which must still be regarded as under discussion, will be found in my *Dante's lyrische Gedichte*, ii. pp. lxxxi and 208-211.—1869.

[2] It is however the same MS. from which I published (in 1826) Dante's letter to the Cardinals in conclave at Carpentras, the authenticity of which will hardly be disputed. Audin and others maintain that it is written by Boccaccio's own hand. Notwithstanding this, the genuineness of Frate Ilario's letter, which I still deny, is hotly contested. When I wrote the words in the text I was unaware that so competent an authority as Em. Repetti had already pronounced himself in the same sense (*Cenni sopra l'Alpe Apuana ed i marmi di Carrara*, 1820, p. 208). He maintained the same views once again in the *Antologia* for Feb. 1827, pp. 17-19. He is supported in Italy by Pietro Venturi (*Giorn. Arcadico*, No. c., Luglio, 1844, pp. 75 *sq.*, also separately issued), Centofanti (*Antologia*, No. cxxxvi., 1832, pp. 5 *sq.*, and *Studi inediti su Dante* 1846, pp. 3-19), and Tommaséo (see the notes on *Purg.* viii. and xxxiii. in his edition of 1856, pp. 342, 531, 532. The majority of the others declare for the authenticity of the letter. Amongst them is

is perhaps worthy of note that Tiraboschi does not take the least notice of this letter.

I have shown in my introductory remarks that the branches of Dante study I have now dealt with practically exhaust all that the modern authorities have to say. Yet the poem itself rises up before us as a work of such strange yet definite significance, and the poet refers so frequently and directly to a deeper meaning which binds all the parts into a whole (*e.g.* in *Inf.* ix. 61; *Purg.* viii. 19, ix. 70), that the recent Commentators themselves have begun to feel uncomfortable at the dull mechanical progression of their brief notes, and most of them have at least given, by way of introduction, some opinion as to the tendency and significance of the first Canto of the poem. But is it possible for the deep, devout meaning of the consecrated poet, who lends his utterance to all the full inspired tones of the Middle Ages, to be made intelligible to our day? Or is it as impossible as a literal translation of the Memphitic hieroglyphics?[1] Dante's words are mere shadow-pictures

Troya (*Veltro alleg.*, pp. 103 *sq.*; cf. Baldacchini in *Veltro all. de' Ghibellini*, pp. 422 *sq.*), who specially combats my doubts expressed in the text. The fullest utterance in this sense is Fraticelli's, in his *Storia della vita di Dante*, pp. 346-368. Luigi Muzzi *Tre epistole lat. di D. All.*, 1845, pp. 48-52, considers the objections at any rate weighty, and Cesare Balbo attaches almost equal importance to them (*Vita di D.*, ii. cap. 6, p. 174, 1st ed.). Scolari expresses still greater hesitation (*Intorno alle epist. lat. di D. All.*, 1844, p. 44). In Germany the letter is considered spurious by Blanc ('*Dante*' in Ersch and Gruber's *Encyclopedie*, xxiii. p. 69, note [two hundred and] 81 *sq.*), Wegele (*D.'s Leben u. Werke*, 3rd ed., p. 400), and Paur (*Ueber d. Quellen zur Lebensgesch. Dantes*, pp. 14, 15, 49). Vericour is therefore far from giving a correct impression of the state of the controversy when he says that this 'very interesting episode' of Dante's life 'has been doubted without any plausible reasons by one or two German critics,—but consecrated afterwards, and after conscientious investigations, by the authority of Count Balbo' (*The Life and Times of Dante*, 1858).—1869.

[1] At a time when Champollion's discoveries were still to come, or at

to these moderns. They are a mere tinkling and inarticulate sound. And when they have to interpret them they seem fairly to take leave of their senses, and force upon Dante the most shrieking modernisms, that thenceforth thrust their grinning heads out of the venerable old vestments! If only they would take the poet's warning:

'O ye who in a little bark, longing to hear, have followed my keel that sings upon its way, turn back to look on your own shores. Commit you not to the ocean; for perchance, losing me, ye will be left astray.'

But we, who in sincere love for our divine poet, wait in silence until we see how much of his meaning he himself will reveal unto us, may hope perhaps that one day it will be permitted us to take to ourselves those other words:

'Ye other few, who have timely lift up your necks for the bread of Angels, on which we feed here but are never satiated, ye may in truth put out your craft on the open brine, keeping my furrow upon the water which is sinking back to the level.'

In the middle of life's journey (the poem begins) I had lost my way in a thick forest; after long struggle I reached its limit, and hastened, in order to gain the open ground, to ascend a hill whose summit was crowned by the rays of the morning sun. Then the poet's path is obstructed first by a panther, then by a lion, and finally by a she-wolf; and he flees before them down the slope of the mountain. Then Virgil appears, and promises to rescue him from the perils surrounding him. The transfigured Beatrice, Dante's early love, had been commanded by Lucia, who in her turn received the command from another gracious lady, to aid the wanderer; and she had come down from Heaven to send Virgil to his rescue. Virgil tells him in Beatrice's name that the only path by which he can return

any rate were as yet unknown to the general public, it was natural to assume that the hieroglyphics contained the record of deep mysterious doctrines.—1869.

in safety will lead him, under his guidance, through Hell and Purgatory to Paradise. Then begins the subterranean journey through the ranks of the unrepentant sinners, ranged according to the degree of their guilt. His passage is opposed by mythical creatures on guard at the entrance to the various sections of Hell, but Virgil's leadership and Beatrice's command reduce them all to silence. Some of the damned reveal their crimes, inquire into the condition of affairs in the upper earth, and lift the veil of futurity for him. Dante descends to the centre of the earth, the abode of Satan, and then ascends by a steep and toilsome path to the antipodes, where he re-issues into the light of day at the foot of the mount of Purgatory. Here the repentant souls do penance in dire suffering, while examples from history show them how to free themselves from the burden of their sins. As Dante ascends the mountain he sees how with every advance the holy joy and courage of the spirits rise, until he comes to the abode of the first innocence, where Beatrice herself comes to meet him, and Virgil vanishes in silence, taking no farewell of him. Beatrice rises with him to the stars, and in each fresh planet he enters the domain of a different virtue. He sees the heroes of the Christian Church; Peter, James, and John find him firm in Faith, Hope, and Love; he is permitted to look upon God himself, and the poem closes.

A tradition, now half a millennium old, recognises in this poem the portrayal of man given over to sin and prevented by his lusts from recovering the path of virtue, till the Christian religion teaches him, by the light of understanding, to recognise sin and free himself from it, and then, in her own person, offers to his transported vision the divine revelation of the secret and the bliss of heaven.—This interpretation, which I shall go on to expand, was undisputed until the end of the last century, when Dionisi observed that the poem had also a political significance. In particular,

the lusts represented by the beasts were especially characteristic of individual States, which should therefore be held in mind in reading the poem (*Preparaz. stor.*, ii. 195; *Anedd.*, ii. 82; Brescia ed. of the *Comedy*, p. v). —Thereby the dykes were pierced! Every reader interpreted the poem after his own whim, and it is a melancholy spectacle to see them rushing off with the several shreds of the truth, rightly feeling that they have grasped a part of it, and yet, with all their pains, unable to make the detached member live, because it belongs to the organism of a deity, not to a polyp that can fasten and grow upon anything that offers. If we read the critics, one after another, and see how much of the truth each one has grasped, we are at a loss to conceive how they could all contrive to stray into such perverse bypaths.

Biagioli has stuck in great part to the old explanation, only translating it into modern form. According to him Dante's first love is *Wisdom*; he strives to reach her, but soon error is heaped upon error in his breast, earthly passions and lusts gain the ascendency, and he can resist them no longer. Lust, pride, and covetousness ever drive him back into the night of ignorance. But his *soul* (*donna gentile*) refuses to submit, and when he has come to years of riper experience, she prays *Truth* (Lucía) to put an end to so shameful a servitude. She again sends *Speculation* on the things of earth (Virgil) and of heaven (Beatrice) to aid and enlighten the wanderer. Philosophy has no difficulty in leading Dante back from his errors by showing him the awful consequences of sin in Hell and Purgatory. The higher speculation lifts him by discourses on the nature of God to the life of contemplation, and so raps him to the stars. These are the main outlines of Biagioli's interpretation, specially developed in the notes to *Inf.* ii. 94 and xvi. 61, and with special penetration in the preface to the *Paradiso*. He himself exclaims of it, 'It is impossible

that the contemplation of such a beautiful truth should fail to enamour the mind that investigates and loves it.'[1]

A very different meaning is found in the *Divina Commedia* by Count Marchetti.[2] Dante, he says, was ambassador in the court of Rome when the storm which had long been brewing suddenly broke upon him, and the sentence of banishment was pronounced. Then he found himself an exile from his country, wandering in the friendless and joyless wood of exile. He sought indeed to return by the straight road to the peace and rest of his fatherland, and the sun of Imperial power (Henry VII.) seemed already to be rising on him and on his troubled country, bringing order into all things; but three monsters obstinately barred his way—the faithless Guelfs of Florence, the ambitious Charles of Valois, and the avaricious Pope. Future generations, so Virgil prophesied, would indeed be liberated from the oppressions of these usurpers by the prowess of the Ghibelline hero, Cangrande della Scala, but as yet there is no comfort and no help for Dante save in poetry and study. The love of his youth, yet unforgotten, gives him his first poetic inspiration, the example of Virgil leads him as he develops it, and the beloved herself lends the loftiest images in which the poem rises to a climax. And thus the great work gradually comes into being. The vast sweep and the exaltation of its contents, the purity of the sentiments it breathes, and the beauty of its language, must win its author immortal fame. All hearts must open to it; Dante's fame must pour

[1] Almost the same line is taken by Brait Delamathe, but with a closer approximation to the early explanations (*Traduction de l'enfer du Dante*, Paris, 1823, p. 28).

[2] *P.S.*—A great deal of what Marchetti urges may be found, either in germ or in full development, in Dionisi's various works, though the latter is always more cautious than the former. Dionisi's works came belated into my hands, and the first note to this essay (p. 19) explains how it is that I cannot now set forth in the text the true relations between him and Marchetti. See below.

its stream over the whole of Italy, until at last his abashed fatherland must reopen her gates with penitent entreaty. And so by his wonderful and toilsome journey he will find a path of return to his home which none of the monsters can obstruct.

Marchetti himself says of this interpretation that it 'brings to the Divine Poem a more reasonable view, and, if I may say so, a far nobler interpretation.' And as a matter of fact it gained credence with incredible rapidity from the Alps to the Ionian sea, receiving such ready acceptance everywhere that I do not know of a single voice raised against it in defence of the old interpretation.[1] In Bologna Paolo Costa undertook the new edition to which we have already referred almost entirely for the purpose of following up Marchetti's discovery in detail and extracting new light on every point therefrom; and it was simply in order to abet and supplement him that Colelli began his Commentary. Nor do I suppose for a moment that all the work that has been published on these lines has come under my notice. Yet even this brilliant success did not secure unbroken peace. Colelli himself introduced some modifications into the theory as first put

[1] There were really several isolated voices raised to contradict the theory. Among them was that of the eminent Parenti (*Memorie di religione, di morale e di letteratura*, 1822, vol. i. pp. 159-180 (in No. 2)), and of that veteran amongst still living Dantophilists, Fil. Scolari (*Della piena e giusta intelligenza della Div. Comm.*, 1823, p. 26). Ferd. Wolf had indeed directed attention to the protest against the new interpretation in the *Wiener Jahrbücher* of 1824 (p. 43 note), just at the very time of the appearance of my essay. Since then a decided reaction has set in, started in the beginning of the forties by Giovanni Ponta and Giov. Bat. Giuliani, and (in special connection with my essay) Luigi Picchioni (1846). Berardinelli (1859), Barelli (1864), and several others, represent the same school. On the other hand Marchetti's politico-polemical misinterpretation of the *Divine Comedy* has been carried to far greater lengths by Gab. Rossetti and his school. More of this in Essay v.—1869. [The essay on Rossetti's interpretation of Dante that Dr. Witte here refers to is not amongst those selected for translation in the present volume.—ED.]

forward, and now that the doors have been flung open, I should not be surprised to see that the real purpose of the *Divina Commedia* is to show how Rome attained to lordship over the world. The mighty State, we might be told, grew great in the wilderness. Then its further progress was opposed by the hungry Gauls, the proud Pyrrhus, the licentious Carthaginians. But a stern punitive discipline and a wise distribution of rewards raised it, under the type of its heroic founder, to the splendour of imperishable glory of the palmy days of Augustus! As for Colelli's emendation, it consists in taking the dark forest (dark to the commentators as well as to the pilgrim) to signify not exile but the party conflicts into which Dante had thrown himself; so that his return from the poetic journey will be not only to Florence, but to the peace of the contemplative life.

And now I would fain place the real root-conception of the *Divine Comedy* side by side with this tangle of error. I would endeavour to speak the word towards which every line of the great enigma points; the word that combines the lovely play of the images of a dream, the uncomprehended cadences that fall upon the ear, with the radiance of truth; the word which gives a new and wondrous meaning to every feature, and—but I am tempted to throw down my pen, for I realise my task and my impotence. I feel indeed that I am gazing on the sun, but its glory appears tempered as by a morning cloud, and I have not the might to rise above it to the eternal blue. My eye can follow the lofty path of the heavenly body, but its own dimness prevents its perceiving clearly the distances and the depths which are all lighted by that same sun. Moreover I have to make an unwonted train of thought luminous, and I feel that my own speech is inadequate to convey even that which I have myself received and experienced.

'Each tongue assuredly must fail, because of our language, and our mind, whose wit is scant to comprehend so much.'

And again, to understand the whole significance of the marvellous edifice, the consistency of every detail must be examined, and here a few lines of suggestion are all that I can command.

While he was still a child, Dante's innocent heart was inflamed with love, and was turned so utterly to heaven and penetrated with a devoutness so pure that we can understand how some have doubted whether the sacred flame was indeed kindled by a daughter of earth, or whether Dante but gave bodily form, in 'the blessing one—Beatrice,' to the joyous and believing love that went out from his young heart to the Heavenly Father. The *Vita Nuova* records this childlike devoutness, unclouded by a suspicion of doubt and knowing no wish but to gaze for ever on the miracle in which the glory of God's grace was mirrored, guarding the tender secret of its plenitude deep in the breast that no stranger glance might desecrate it.[1] A few detached poems belong to the same cycle.[2]

But when Dante attained to man's estate, Beatrice was snatched from him. Long did he mourn for her as for his lost innocence,[3] but finally fresh charms ensnared him. In the glance of a gracious lady he thought he found Beatrice's love and pity once again.[4] She promises to share and

[1] *Vita Nuova*: 'This most gentle one, who was the destroyer of all the vices and queen of the virtues.'

'And whoso should endure to stand and gaze upon her would become a noble thing, or else would die. And whenso she finds one worthy to look on her, he hath experience of her power; for that which giveth him salvation comes to pass on him.'

'When they asked me: By whom hath this Love thus undone thee? I looked at them and smiled, but answered naught.'

[2] *e.g.* the Ballad *Fresca rosa novella*, and the Sonnets 19, 20, 21, 23 in recent editions. The ballad however can hardly be regarded as a work of Dante's.—1869.

[3] *Morte poich' io non trovo a cui mi doglia*, and also the last chapter of the *Vita Nuova*. Who does not know his moving lamentations over his vanished piety, *Deh, pellegrini, che pensosi andate?*

[4] *Vita Nuova*: 'Wheresoever this lady saw me she grew full of pity in her semblance, and of a pale hue, as it were of love, wherefore many a

comfort his grief, but soon the lightnings of her eyes drive out the memory of the dead, and she absorbs his whole heart. She is Philosophy.[1] The *Amoroso Convivio* is dedicated to this tormenting love.[2] It is restless and full of anguish,[3] for the peace of childlike self-surrender has left

time she called my most noble lady to my mind.'—'I came to such a pass by the vision of this lady that my eyes began to delight overmuch in looking upon her.'—'My heart began grievously to repent of the longing by which it had so basely suffered itself to be possessed.' [In a like vein the poet explains the cause of this and other errors of faith, in *Par.* v. 10: 'And if aught else seduce your love, it is no other than some ill recognised impress of this [true good] that shines through it.' —1869.]

[1] *Amoroso Convivio* ii. 13. 'When I had lost the first delight of my soul . . . I was left transfixed by so great sorrow that not any comfort aught availed me. Howbeit after a certain space my mind, which was striving to heal itself, took counsel (since neither my consolations nor those of any other availed) to betake itself to the way which a certain disconsolate one had pursued to console himself; and I set me to read that book of Boethius, not known to many, etc. . . . Albeit at the first it was hard for me to penetrate their meaning. . . . I could already perceive many things, as though in a dream, even as may be seen in the *Vita Nuova*. And as it chances that a man goes in search of silver and without purposing it findeth gold, which some hidden cause presenteth to him, perchance not without divine command; so I, who was seeking to console me, found not only the assuagement of my tears, but words of authors and of sciences and of books, considering the which I deemed that Philosophy, who was the lady of these authors, of these sciences, and of these books, must needs be a thing supreme; and I conceived her fashioned as a gentle lady, and I might not conceive her with any expression save that of pity. . . . I began to feel so much of her sweetness, that the love of her drove out and destroyed every other thought. Wherefore feeling me uplifted from the thought of the first love to the virtue of this one, as though in amaze I opened my mouth,' etc. [. . . .]

[2] Presumably Dante intended to collect and explain all the Canzoni that referred to this his second love in the *Amoroso Convivio*. It was to contain fourteen poems; but the poet only brought it up to the third. Elsewhere I hope to show that the remaining Canzoni are for the most part still extant. [. . . . The promise was redeemed in the second volume of *Dante's lyrische Gedichte*, pp. xxxii-xlii.—1869.]

[3] It is just this want of peace that makes the contrast between this second love and the love of Beatrice. The latter can ask the poet, in *Purg.* xxxi. 22, 'Within the longings for me which led thee to love that good beyond which is naught whereto to aspire, what cross-ditches or what chains didst thou discover which should thus strip thee of the hope of passing further forth?'

his breast. His impetuosity ever demands new favours from his beloved; and she often turns away from him in disdain, whereon he breaks forth into loud laments, and feels at times that this love can never bring enduring life to his heart.[1]

She leads him to speculate on everything that presents itself to his gaze. He searches into the nature of Justice, of Courage, of Magnanimity; he works out his theories on the ordering of the State, and the significance of the great events of his day, and he dedicates his life to the realisation of the truth as he conceives it. To this period of his life belongs the share he took in the government of his native city, and probably also his writings on language and poetry. But soon the party strife threatens entirely to absorb[2] him in the vortex of mundane cares and rising passions. Then Philosophy points him to the steep path of speculation, and he turns aside from the temptations of earth and the din of her struggles to climb upward, that he may learn in the sunlight to gaze into the eternal truth, and apprehend the nature of God. But he is soon to find how indequate is human reason, and how devious the path he has chosen, since revelation alone can lead him to his goal.[3] He has estranged himself from Chris-

[1] I assign to the *Amoroso Convivio* the Canzone, '*E' m' incresce di me sì malamente*,' which contains the passage, 'We will give peace to the heart, and delight to you, said to my eyes a certain time those of the beauteous lady. But when they knew by their wit that my very mind was now clean reft away by force of her, with love's ensigns they wheeled them round.' And again, from '*Io sento sì d'Amor la gran possanza*': 'I say not that love is working more mightily than I would; for did he do all that my will demands, that power which nature gave me would not endure, seeing it is exhausted. And this it is whereat I suffer woe, that power holds not faith with will.'

[2] *Purg.* xxxi. 34, he says to Beatrice: 'Present things, with their false delight, turned my steps aside so soon as your countenance was hid.' [A similar vein of self-accusation appears in the poet's words to the shade of his friend Forese Donati, *Purg.* xxiii. 115: 'If thou call to mind what thou wast with me and I with thee, the present memory will still be grievous.'—1869.]

[3] How deceitful is the light of Philosophy, and why it is so we learn

tendom, the three virtues which are so entirely proper to our religion fail him, and the evil passions which usurp their place hurl him back into the dark turmoil of his life.[1] [....]

Then the grace of God[2] once more awakens the light

from Beatrice in *Par.* xxix. 85: 'Ye on earth walk not on one path in your philosophy, so do the love of appearance and the thought that springs from it transport you.' The teaching which the poet has enjoyed in the school of earthly wisdom, so far from conferring upon him the power to comprehend the divine truths which Beatrice reveals, actually robs him of it. And so, when he asks her why her discourse is so obscure to him, she answers (*Purg.* xxxiii. 85), 'That thou mayst recognise . . . that school which thou hast followed, and mayst see how far its teaching can follow my discourse; and mayst see that thy way is as distant from the divine way as is the stretch from earth to the heaven that speeds most high.'—1869.

[1] The Commentaries have from the beginning varied as to the meaning of the three beasts which denote these passions. [The *Ottimo* gives envy as an alternative to the usual interpretation of the wolf (cf. *Inf.* vi. 74)]. Jacopo della Lana explains the *lonza* as *vana gloria*; Bosone d'Agubbio as *creazion bona* (?). I may therefore be excused for taking yet another view, or rather for giving a more general interpretation of these, and taking the panther to be *self-seeking*, the lion *pride*, and the she-wolf *dissension* (cf. above, p. 49). There is no real disagreement between the other views and mine therefore, and I must deprecate an appeal to *Purg.* xx. 10 against me.—The only point in which Dionisi and Marchetti are entirely right is when they charge the old interpretation with failing to establish any connection between the *lupa* and Cangrande della Scala. This is so true that none of the old Commentaries, so far as I know, think of explaining the *veltro* as Cangrande at all. This most striking identification is first advanced, as far as I am aware, by an anonymous Commentator of the year 1447, quoted by Dionisi (*Preparaz. stor.*, ii. 160) from a Magliabecchian MS. Dante, as we learn from the *De Monarchia*, believed that the one only and divinely appointed way to unite the whole of humanity in peace and quietness was to be found in submission to the consecrated power of the Emperor. The Guelfs, unmindful of their duty, resist it, and as long as they raise their factious standard the she-wolf of dissension will stalk abroad, spreading devastation as she goes. It is only the victory of the Ghibellines that can bring any hope of this monster's destruction. This explains the prophecy put into Virgil's mouth by Dante concerning the noble youth who was the pride of the Italian Ghibellines. This remark may also be taken to heart by those who maintain that the *Divina Commedia* deals too much with mundane matters for a religious poem. [Cf. on the whole subject the introduction to my German translation of the *Divine Comedy*, pp. 28-35.—1869.]

[2] Boccaccio's exposition of the passages bearing on this point in the second canto of the *Inferno* is good (*Com.*, i. pp. 241-244).

of religion in his breast; he repents of having admitted an overweening philosophy into his heart;[1] the old faith, the

[1] Since Dionisi's view has not had its proper position assigned to it in the text, I will here attempt to indicate it in outline. It certainly ought to be noticed, for it far excels the other modern interpretations both in depth and in the way in which it is worked out. Dionisi (*Prepar. stor.*, i. p. 137), in contrast to his imitators, rightly follows the Commentator known as Petrus Dantis in noting that Dante, in the perfect objectivity of his poem, lays upon himself the failings of the whole human race, so that two meanings, one moral or allegorical, and the other historical, run through the whole work. From the allegorical point of view then, says Dionisi, Dante, as the old Commentators saw, depicts in his own person the human soul in general, at first ignorant and estranged from God, and then, in the process of the poem itself, ascending to knowledge and faith by the path there indicated. But in the historical sense we find the banished Ghibelline poet, in spite of the difficulties thrown in his way by his own foes and the foes of the good cause, struggling to lead his fatherland into the better way by his poem, and so win his return to Florence and the glory of the poet's crown. Dionisi looks upon this historical signification as showing us what Dante was really at, while the allegory is designed as a picturesque background. In the *Prepar. stor.*, ii. p. 206, he says: 'The trouble is that in this moral sense we cannot say what the *veltro* may be'; and p. 208, 'These inconsistencies clearly show that the moral sense is intermittent, and is only there to sustain the rude and simple readers who cannot appreciate the history. Nevertheless the exposition of the said moral meaning is by no means to be despised; for like the odorous bark of quince or cedar it has been found capable of giving delight to men of learning as well as others, until I had the good fortune of setting before them the far more delicious and sustaining pith and marrow.' And accordingly he is driven (*Prepar. stor.*, ii. 105-110) to take refuge in the moral sense to explain the reproach of infidelity which Beatrice urges against the poet (*Purg.* xxx. 124) when she meets him again in Purgatory: 'So soon as I was on the threshold of my second age, and changed my life, this man removed himself from me and gave him to another. When I had risen from flesh to spirit, and beauty and power had grown upon me, to him I was less dear and pleasing, and he turned his steps upon an untrue path, following false images of good that keep no promise whole.'

Dionisi indeed rightly feels that Dante's second love (of Philosophy) sprang up after the death of Beatrice Portinari; but to him Dante's love of the transfigured Beatrice of the *Divine Comedy* is but a wondrous fusion of the two, a symbolisation of the loftiest philosophy under the name of his dead love. 'In the *Comedy* he returned to the adorning of his first lady, that is to say Beatrice, with the supernatural and scholastic light of faith' (*An.* ii. 44). 'That Beatrice represents Philosophy in the *Comedy* no one doubts' (ii. 55). 'There sprang up in him

old love of Beatrice, awakes in fresh intensity,[1] and on the day on which the Saviour set the human race free, he too is

again, like a new olive shoot out of the stock, or there was born again, like the Phœnix from its ashes, his ancient love for his first lady, as pure and hallowed as ever; and at the same time the flame of Wisdom which had erst burnt within him flashed up again; whence was formed this wonderful new love, which I call the third. Its object was the ancient Beatrice, but gloriously clad and adorned in the garments and the beauty of Philosophy' (*Prepar. stor.*, ii. 67). Thus to him Dante's second love is in no sort of contradiction to his first, and he denies (*An.* ii. p. 45) that the *gentil donna* of the *Vita Nuova* (§ 37) is 'substantially and truly' the same as the lady of the *Convivio* (ii. 2). On the one hand he does not think the pictorial method of expression can be pushed so far as to make love of abstract Philosophy pass for unfaithfulness to Beatrice, who had actually lived on earth; and, on the other hand, quite in the modern spirit, he looks upon no kind of philosophical inquiry as contrary to the teaching of Theology. This teaching is supreme over all such inquiries, and they are indeed no more than a part of it. 'It is not true that Dante ever abandoned his lady after once he had known her. After Beatrice's death she was Philosophy in the full extension of the term, and therefore Theology, which is the noblest branch of Philosophy' (*An.* ii. p. 90). Dionisi sets aside on the ground of anachronism (*Prepar.* ii. 105-8) the not entirely erroneous idea of 'Petrus Dantis' and the Canonico Biscioni that the *pargolletta* —with love for whom (as manifested in the *Convivio*) Beatrice reproaches Dante—is the study of poetry and other profane branches of learning. He has to take refuge (on manifest compulsion) in the theory that these accusations, which are devoid of all historical foundation, are to be understood in a moral sense only, in that Dante represents the human race, so many of whom, in despite of wisdom, throw themselves into the arms of debasing passions. It is especially surprising to find this erroneous view in Dionisi, since he says himself a few pages before: 'Even the love or study of Wisdom, may in a certain sense be called a false, that is an evil, love, when it makes us love God the less. And this it does when followed with such fervour and affection as to dry up the will.' Well! and this is exactly how it was, both in form and substance. Ever since the days of Abelard in the twelfth century the rationalistic pride of scholasticism and the humble faith of mysticism had been as sharply opposed as they are to-day; the only difference being that in the Middle Ages the rationalists did not actually profess to set themselves above revelation, though they explained and distorted divine things after their own will and pleasure. All this will further serve to refute the conclusions drawn by Biagioli (*Intr.* to *Par.* p. vii) from the *Convivio*, regardless of the fact that the book is actually written under the dominion of the second love. (Cf. ii. 9: 'The blessed Beatrice, of whom I do not purpose to speak further in this book.') [See next essay.]

[1] It must be noted that the second love of Beatrice differs from the

released in his inmost soul. But the sins of the past still weigh upon him, and the Church teaches that he can only enter into the glory of God when his contrite heart has acknowledged in deepest anguish the sin of his estrangement from God, that he may then by fitting penance wash from his soul the stains that obscure her divine purity (*contritio, satisfactio*).[1]

[I have thought it best to omit the conclusion of this article, since it coincides in content, and sometimes word for word, with the preceding essay (pp. 14 *sq.*).—1869.]

first, as a theology founded on knowledge and research differs from childlike faith. Thus in the whole poem, and more especially in the *Paradiso*, Dante is in possession of *doctrine*, properly so called. Biagioli deserves thanks for having traced the sciences in the several planets (*Intr.* to *Par.* p. vi), although the observation only leads him into fresh errors himself.

[1] The *Confessio* will be found in *Purg.* xxxi. 1-67. I was first put on the track of the true interpretation by Boccaccio's Commentary, and afterward found it fairly elaborated in that of Iacopo della Lana (*Purg.* i.).

III.—DANTE'S TRILOGY

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i. pp. 141-182 (1869).]

In reissuing my essays on the poet of the *Divine Comedy* I have realised afresh that the real kernel of them all, as well as of my other Dante studies, lies in the very earliest of them (No. II. in this issue). My other labours in this field strike me as subsidiary to the root-idea there developed, calculated to strengthen its foundations rather than to lead to anything fresh.

In an article opposing my views, and written with much insight, the French scholar, Julian Klaczko, declares:[1] 'M. Witte's hypothesis reappeared in a thousand forms in countless works on the *Divine Comedy* published in Germany. So that his conception, as already said, holds sovereign sway over Dante criticism beyond the Rhine. It is the point of departure for every fresh essay or discussion, and the timid objections that it has met have entirely failed to shake its credit. At the very most they have only occasioned some modification of details in the general system, which seems to be established all the more firmly by the partial concessions which its zealous and acute champions have seen good to make.'—Had the German Dante-students, or even the majority of them, really been as favourably disposed towards my hypothesis concerning the connection of Dante's three chief Italian works as M. Klaczko describes, it would scarcely be necessary to revert

[1] *Revue Contemporaine*, 1854, No. xvi. 385-440; see especially 400-424.

to the question once more. But I know only too well that this is not the case. And now, since my opinion, despite all contradiction, remains unaltered, I cannot but regard it as a singularly happy dispensation that at the expiration of five and a half decades I am allowed to return once more to the defence of the position of which I sketched the outline in my early youth. The reader must pardon the inevitable repetition into which I shall occasionally fall.

I. The *Vita Nuova* and the *Convivio* concur in testifying that after Beatrice's death Dante allowed himself to be fascinated by other charms.

1. (*Vita N.* cap. 42, Son. 25.) Beyond the sphere that has the largest sweep, passes the sigh that issues from my heart . . .

When he has reached the place of his desire, he sees a lady who receiveth honour . . .

I know he speaketh of that gentle one, for often he repeateth 'Beatrice.'

2. (*Vita N.* cap. 36.) Then after a certain space, being in a place wherein I recalled to myself the past time, I was in right mournful plight, and with such dolorous thoughts as gave me in outward guise the semblance of a terrible dismay. Wherefore I being aware of my travail uplifted my eyes to see if any beheld me; and I

6. (*Conv.* ii. 8: 36.) The life of my heart was wont to be a sweet thought. This thought many a time took its way to the feet of God, which is to say that in thought I contemplated the kingdom of the blest. And I say *'Where it saw a lady in glory'* to give to understand that I was and am assured by her gracious revelation that she was in Heaven; wherefore, pondering thereon many times as I might, I went thither as though rapt.

7. (*Conv.* ii. 2.) Twice had the star of Venus returned in that circle of hers which maketh her appear at even or at morn, after the passing away of that blessed Beatrice who liveth in Heaven with the angels and on earth with my soul, when that gentle lady of whom I made mention at the end of the *Vita Nuova* first appeared to my eyes

saw a gentle lady, young and very beauteous, who from a window was looking on me, right pitifully to judge from her semblance, so that all pity seemed gathered in her. Wherefore . . . I said within myself: It may not be but that a most noble love is with this piteous lady.

in company with Love and took a certain place in my mind.

3. (*Vita N.* cap. 37.) Thenceforth it came to pass that whensoever this lady beheld me she became piteous in semblance and of a pallid hue, as though of love; wherefore often did she mind me of my most noble lady, who was ever in semblance of like colour.

4. (*Vita N.* cap. 38.) I came to such a pass by looking upon this lady that my eyes began to take too much delight in beholding her, wherefore many times I reviled myself and held myself most base therefor; and many a time I spoke evil of the vanity of my eyes, and said to them in my thoughts: But now ye were wont to make all who saw your condition weep; and now meseems ye would fain forget it, for the sake of this lady who looks upon you . . . and lest all this battle which I sustained against myself should be known to none save to the wretch who endured it, I purposed to compose a sonnet.

8. (*Conv.* II. 2 : 27.) It behoved, ere this new love were made perfect, that there should be great battle between the thought that nurtured it and that which was counter to it, and which still held the citadel of my mind on the part of that glorious Beatrice.

5. (*Vita N.* cap. 39.) The sight of this lady brought me into so strange a plight that many times I thought of her as of one who pleased me too well; and I thought of her thus: This is a lady gentle, beauteous, young,

9. (*Conv.* II. 2 : 12.) As is set forth by me in the aforesaid book, more of her gentleness than of my choice it came to pass that I consented to be hers, for she showed herself possessed of so great a passion

and sage, and hath appeared perchance by the will of Love that my life may have repose. And many times I thought yet more amorously, so that my heart consented thereto, that is to this my discourse. And when it had consented thereto I bethought me again, as moved by reason. . . . Wherefore when I had many a time thus fought within myself, it was my will further to utter certain words concerning it; and inasmuch as in the battle of my thoughts those which spoke for her overcame, methought it meet to address myself to her.

(Son. 22.) A gentle thought that speaks of thee comes oft to sojourn with me, and discourses so sweetly of Love that he makes my heart consent to him.

of pity for my widowed life that the spirits of my eyes became her friends in highest measure, and having become so they made her image within me such that my will was content to be put at the disposal of that image.

II. The *Vita Nuova* and the *Divine Comedy* regard this new attachment as infidelity to Beatrice. (Compare No. 4 above.)

10. (*Vita N.* cap. 40.) Then my heart began dolorously to repent of its desire, whereby it had thus basely suffered itself to be possessed for certain days, counter to the constancy of reason; and when this so ill desire was banished all my thoughts came back to their most gentle Beatrice.

11. (*Vita N.* cap. 34, Canz. 4.) To her (*i.e.* death) all my desires turned when my lady had been struck by her cruelty; because the joy of her beauty departing from our sight, became a spiritual great beauteousness. (Compare No. 4 above.)

12. (*Purg.* xxx. 124.) As soon as I was on the threshold of my second age and changed my life, this man took himself away from me and gave him to another. When I had risen from flesh to spirit, and beauty and virtue had increased upon me, I was less dear and pleasing to him; and he turned his footsteps

on a path untrue chasing false images of good, which keep no promise whole.

13. (*Purg.* xxxi. 34.) Weeping I said: The present things, with their false pleasure, turned my steps aside, soon as your face was hid.

14. (*Purg.* xxxi. 52.) If, by the death of me, supreme delight thus played thee false, what mortal thing thereafter should entangle thee in its desire? At the first stroke of things deceitful thou shouldst have lifted thyself up after me, who was no longer such.

III. To bring him back, Beatrice herself appears to the poet in visions.

15. (*Vita N.* cap. 40.) To meet this adversary of the reason there arose one day a strong imagination in me about the hour of noon; for methought I saw that glorious Beatrice with those blood-coloured vestments wherewith she first appeared unto my eyes.

16. (*Purg.* xxx. 133.) Nor did it avail me to gain inspirations for him, wherewith in dreams and otherwise I called him back; so little did he care.

17. (*Purg.* xxx. 31.) Circled with olive over a white veil appeared a lady to me clad, under a green mantle, with colour of living flame.

IV. Finally the memory of Beatrice triumphs, and the monument of this triumph is found in the *Divine Comedy*.

18. (*Vita. N.* cap. 43.) After this sonnet there appeared to me a wondrous vision wherein I saw things that made me purpose to write no more of this blessed one until such season as I might treat more worthily of her. And to come at this I study all I may, as she knows verily. So that if it be His pleasure by whom all things live that my life be preserved some years, I hope to write of her what ne'er was writ of woman.

19. (*Par.* xvii. 127.) Casting every lie aside make manifest thy *vision* whole.

20. (*Par.* xxxiii. 61.) Such am I; for my *vision* hath passed almost utterly away, yet doth the sweetness that was born of it still drop within my heart.

V. The duration of this period of unfaithfulness is either given vaguely (*certain days*, see above, No. 10), or in such

a manner as to lead us to suppose that it lasted several years. The *Vita Nuova* speaks of it as not beginning till more than a year after Beatrice's death, while the *Convivio* mentions thirty months as a part of the period. (Cf. below, No. VIII.) Both the *Vita Nuova* and the *Commedia* appear to place the end of it in, or shortly before, the year 1300.

21. (*Vita N.* cap. 41.) After this tribulation it chanced (at that season when many folk were going to look upon that blessed Image which Jesus Christ left to us for an example of his most beauteous features, upon which my lady now looketh in glory), that certain pilgrims were passing along a way the which is as it were the midst of the city where was born, lived, and died this most gentle lady. . . . The folk who go on service to the Most High are called 'Romei,' in so far as they go to Rome, whither those whom I here call pilgrims were going.

The earliest editor, Sermartelli, notes on this passage: 'Giubileo,' 'Sudario,' and Giov. Villani (*Cronica*, viii. 36) expressly tells us that Veronica's napkin was the special attraction for the pilgrims to Rome in the year of Jubilee 1300: 'For the consolation of the Christian pilgrims, every Friday, or solemn day of festival, the Veronica on the napkin of Christ was displayed in San Piero. Wherefore a great part of the Christians who were then alive made the said pilgrimage, both women and men, from diverse and distant countries both far and near.'

Compare with this *Par.* xxxi. 103: 'As is he who, perchance from Croatia, cometh to look on our Veronica, who because of ancient fame is never sated, but saith in his thoughts, so long as it be displayed: My Lord Jesus Christ, very God, then was thy semblance such as this.'[1]

[1] Reumont, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom*, ii. 649, Wegele, *D. Al. Leben u. Werke*, 3rd edition, p. 114, and Eliot Norton, *The New Life of Dante*, p. 114, all recognise the connection between the passage in the *Vita Nuova* and the year of Jubilee. Professor Boehmer, however, takes the reference as being to the annual exhibition of the Napkin in January, and fixes the year as 1294.

[Recent editions of the *Vita Nuova* read '*va*,' not '*andava*,' in this

In reference to the second Jubilee (Clement VI. having fixed its recurrence at fifty years) Petrarch says (*Epistol. var.*, 34, ed. 1601, p. 584), *à propos* of the Cardinal of Boulogne's journey to Rome, 'he will see, whether on the woman's napkin, or on the walls of all his mother's churches, the effigy of the Lord's countenance still extant.'[1]

A weakness of the eyes which the *Vita Nuova* mentions immediately before this pilgrimage, is spoken of in the *Convivio* as taking place during the period of this second love.

22. (*Vita N.* cap. 40.) By this rekindling of sighs my accustomed weeping was rekindled in such guise that my eyes appeared two things that only longed to weep, and it often chanced that by continued weeping there gathered round them a purple colour such as is wont to appear by reason of some anguish that folk endure. Wherefore it appeared that they were rightly rewarded for their vanity, so that thenceforth they might not see any who should look upon them.

23. (*Conv.* iii. 9: 147.) The star might also seem beclouded; and I had experience of this that same year in which this canzone was born, for by toiling my sight much in study of reading I so enfeebled my visual spirits that the stars appeared to me all blurred with a kind of halo. And by long repose in dark and cold places, and by cooling the body of the eye with clear water, I bound together again the scattered powers and recovered the former good condition of my sight.

The *Convivio* never says anything of Dante's return from this second love to the first love for Beatrice, but explains that the author does not purpose to discourse expressly of Beatrice.

24. (*Conv.* ii. 9: 49.) And here, as I am discoursing of the immortality of the soul, it will be fitting to close my words concerning that living Beatrice, who is in bliss, and of whom I purpose not further to speak in this book.

passage: 'At that season when many folk *go* to look, etc.' This of course tells in favour of interpreting the passage as an indication of the season (January or Easter), not of the year.—Ed.]

[1] Cf. Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mitt. Alt.*, vi. (1867) p. 319.

The *Comedy*, however, appears to place the return to Beatrice in the period immediately preceding the vision therein recorded.

25. (*Purg.* xxiii. 115.) Wherefore I to him: If thou recall to mind what thou wast with me and what I was with thee, the present memory will still be grievous. From this life he who is walking there in front, turned me *the other day*, when His sister (and I pointed to the sun) was round.'

VI. Love for Beatrice brought blessing to the poet, drawing him heavenwards, and giving him peace.

26. (*Vita N.* cap. 24.) Meseemed that (Love) joyfully said to me in my heart: 'Think henceforth to bless the day that I captured thee, for thou hast cause to do it'—and verily methought my heart was so joyous that methought it was not in truth my heart, so new was its state.

27. (*Vita N.* cap. 26.) She appeared so gentle and so full of all delights that they who gazed on her conceived in themselves a sweetness more noble and tender than they might tell. Nor was there any who might look on her but at the first he must needs sigh.

28. (*Purg.* xxx. 115.) This man was virtually such in his *new life* that each propitious habit would have made in him a marvellous essay. . . . A certain space did I sustain him with my countenance; revealing my youthful eyes to him, I led him with me, turned to the right quarter.

29. (*Purg.* xxxi. 22.) Whereat she to me: Within the longings for me which led thee to love that good beyond which is naught whereto to aspire, what cross-ditches or what chains didst thou find because of which thou shouldst strip thee of the hope of passing further forth? and what easements or advancements were displayed upon the brow of others that thou shouldst prank thyself before them?

At first, indeed, the second love promised comfort and peace, but in their place it only brought doubt and disillusioning.

30. (*Canz.* vi., '*E' m'incresce di me si malamente.*') 'We will give peace to the heart, delight to you,' once said the eyes of this fair lady to my eyes; but when they knew by their intelligence

my mind was now clean reft away rrom me, by force of her, then, with love's colours flying, wheeled they round so that I might not even once again have sight of their victorious semblance; whereat remains my mind in sadness that looked for comfort from them.

31. (*Canz.* vii., '*Così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro.*') As harsh I fain would be in my discourse as in her gestures is that beauteous stone which every moment wins to greater hardness and more cruel nature.

32. (*Canz.* x., '*Amor, dacchè convien pur ch' io mi doglia.*') If she careth not, from no other have I hope of succour; and she, an outlaw from thy court, who art my Lord, heedeth not stroke of any shaft of thine. Such breastplate hath she made her of her pride that every arrow there breaks off its course; wherefore her armoured heart is cleft by none.

33. (*Ballad,* '*Voi che sapete ragionar d'Amore.*') So doth she scorn whoever looketh on her, she maketh him bow down his eyes in terror; for round her own there ever whirls an image of all cruelty.

34. (*Canz.* iv., '*Le dolci rime d'amor ch'io solia.*') Sweet rhymes of love which I was wont to seek within my thoughts, needs must I quit; not that I have no hope to come to them again; but that the scornful and proud gestures which my lady shows have closed the path of my accustomed speech.

VII. The mortal maiden, Beatrice Portinari, who even here below appeared to her lover as the symbol of a pure devotion untroubled by doubt, is transfigured to a brighter spiritual beauty when the poet turns again to the thought of the departed, after a space of temporary unfaithfulness. She becomes a symbol of the deeper knowledge of God, steeled by study against the attacks of doubt and error. (Cf. No. 11 above.)

35. (*Inf.* ii. 76.) O Lady of Virtue, by whom alone the human race transcendeth all that is contained within that heaven that hath the smallest circle.

(*Purg.* vi. 43.) But fix not thy thoughts on such deep questioning, unless She bid thee who shall be the light 'twixt truth and thine intelligence. I know not if thou understand: I speak of Beatrice.

(*Purg.* xxxiii. 115.) O Light, O Glory of the human race.

(*Par.* iv. 118.) 'O love of the primal lover, O goddess,' said I, 'whose speech doth so o'erflood and warm that more and more it quickeneth me.'

VIII. The poet indicates Philosophy as the second object of his love to which he turned after Beatrice's death.

36. (*Conv.* ii. 16 : 98.) So at the close of this second tract I say and declare that the lady of whom I was enamoured after my first love was the most beauteous and pure daughter of the Emperor of the Universe to whom Pythagoras gave the name Philosophy.

It was the eloquence of Cicero, of a heathen writer therefore, and of Boethius which led him to her, and she appeared to him as a sympathetic comforter.

37. (*Conv.* ii. 13 : 5.) When I had lost the first delight of my soul I was left pierced with so great sorrow that no consolation availed me. Yet my mind, which was striving to heal itself, had wisdom to turn to the fashion which some other disconsolate one had taken to console himself. And I set me to reading that book of Boethius, wherein, a captive and an exile, he consoled himself; and another book which Tullius had written, wherein treating of friendship he had touched upon words of the consolation of Lelius for the death of his friend Scipio. . . . I, who was seeking to console me, found not only a remedy for my tears, but words of authors and of sciences and of books, considering the which I judged that, in truth, Philosophy, who was the lady of these authors and these sciences and these books, was a thing supreme. And I pictured her after the fashion of a gentle lady, and I could not picture her in any attitude save of compassion. And, moved by this image, I began to go where she was herself to be seen in verity, to wit, to the schools of the religious orders, and to the disputations of such as philosophise; so that in short season—perhaps of thirty months—I began to feel so much of her sweetness that the love of her banished and destroyed all other thought. . . . This lady was the daughter of God, the queen of all, most noble and most fair Philosophy.

38. (*Conv.* ii. 15 : 186.) By the third heaven I understand Rhetoric.

(*Conv.* ii. 16.) The movers whereof are . . . such as Boethius and Tully, who, by the sweetness of their discourse, drew me

into the way of love (that is of study) of that most gentle lady Philosophy, by the rays of their star (which is the writing concerning her).

Her eyes, whose beauty he lauds, are her demonstrations; by the smile of her mouth she persuades.

39. (*Conv.* iii. 15: 14.) The eyes of Wisdom are her demonstrations, whereby the truth is perceived most certainly; and her persuasions are her smile, for therein she showeth forth the inner light of Wisdom under a certain veil.

Love of her expresses itself in eager study.

40. (*Conv.* ii. 16: 79.) And we are to know that in this allegory love doth ever purport that study which is the application of the mind enamoured of aught, to that same thing whereof it is enamoured.

IX. It may seem obvious enough here also to detect a subsequent spiritualising of an attachment to an earthly woman. But Dante expressly guards himself against such an interpretation, assuring us that his second love was in no sense concerned with anything but Philosophy.

41. (*Conv.* i. 2: 117.) I fear the infamy of having pursued so great a passion as he who reads the above named odes will conceive to have ruled in me; the which infamy is wholly done away by this present speaking of myself, which shows that not passion but virtue was the provoking cause.

X. By Philosophy Dante understands knowledge generally; but in particular the metaphysical rather than the ethical portion of the philosophical field.

42. (*Conv.* iii. 11: 133.) Philosophy, considered in herself, hath for subject understanding, and for form an almost divine love of that which is understood. The good of philosophy is that most excellent delight which suffereth not intermission nor defect, to wit that true felicity which is acquired by contemplation of the truth. . . . By long custom those sciences on which philosophy most fervently doth terminate her gaze are called by her name, to wit natural science, moral science, and metaphysic, which last—because thereon she doth of most necessity and with most fervour terminate her gaze—is called First Philosophy.

43. (*Conv.* ii. 14 : 59.) To the eighth sphere, which is that of the stars, answereth natural science, which is called Physic ; and first science, which is called Metaphysic. (ii. 15 : 90.) Metaphysic treateth of the first substances, the which we cannot understand save only by their effects. . . . It treateth of the things which have not matter, and which are not sensible. . . . And it treateth of things incorruptible, the which had the beginning of their creation from God.

It is to metaphysical questions that the poet tells us he directed his loving studies; and he found difficulties in their solution which proved, at any rate provisionally, insoluble.

44. (*Conv.* iv. 1 : 60.) Inasmuch as this my lady alienated her sweet looks some little from me, especially in those parts wherein I looked and sought whether the First Matter of the elements was created by God,[1] therefore I withdrew a little from frequenting her aspect, and as though dwelling apart from her I began to consider with my thought, etc.

XI. The knowledge of divine things which theology offers brings blessing and assured peace, like the devout acceptance of the means of redemption unperplexed by doubt. It is the sure haven from all wanderings and errors of the human spirit.

45. (*Conv.* ii. 14 : 62.) To the ninth sphere answereth moral science, and to the quiet heaven answereth the divine science which is called Theology.

46. (*Conv.* ii. 15 : 122.) The crystalline heaven, which is reckoned as the primum mobile, hath comparison right manifest with moral philosophy ; for moral philosophy doth duly order us towards the other sciences.

And again the empyrean heaven, because of its peace, is like to the divine science, which is full of all peace, which suffereth not any contention of opinions or of sophistical arguments,

[1] The phrase is 'se la prima materia degli elementi era *da Dio intesa*.' I have translated the words in italics as I suppose Dr. Witte to understand them ; cf. below, p. 85. But I doubt whether '*intesa*' can really bear the meaning of 'created.' It might mean 'intended' or 'understood,' but neither would give as easy a sense as 'created.'—ED.

because of the most excellent certainty of its subject, which is God. And of her He himself saith to his disciples, 'My peace I give unto you, my peace I leave with you,' giving and leaving to them his doctrine, which is this science whereof I speak. Of her Solomon saith, 'Sixty are the queens and eighty the beloved concubines, and of the young handmaids there is no number; but one is my dove and my perfect one.' All the sciences he calleth queens and paramours and handmaidens, and her he calleth the dove because she is without spot of strife, and her he calleth perfect because she maketh us to see the truth in its perfection.

47. (*Par.* xxvi. 55.) All those tooth-grips which have the power to turn the heart to God combine to wake my love; for the being of the world, and my own being, the death which He endured that I might live, and that which each believer hopeth even as do I, together with the aforesaid living consciousness, have drawn me from the sea of the perverse and set me on the shore of the true love.

XII. Philosophical inquiry also promises light, but soon, when the eye of the searcher seems to have found it, it hides itself in mists which the understanding vainly seeks to pierce. At first Dante comforts himself with the confident hope that his restless study, if not scared by temporary failure, will at last be victorious. In his wrestle for knowledge he calls himself, at thirty, still too young for success, which would surely be a hard saying if it were a mortal woman he was striving to win.

48. (*Conv.* iii. 15: 203.) In the beginning Philosophy herself appeared to me proud on the part of her body, which is wisdom, because she did not smile on me, inasmuch as I understood not yet her persuasions; and scornful because she did not turn her eyes on me, that is to say I was not able to perceive her demonstrations. And in all this the defect was on my side.

49. (*Conv.* ii. 16: 27.) The eyes of this lady are her demonstrations, the which, when turned upon the eyes of the intellect, enamour the soul. . . . Where it saith, '*If he fear not anguish of sighs*,' we are to understand, 'if he do not shrink from the toil of study and the strife of difficulties,' which at the beginning of the glances of this lady rise up manifold. But then, when

her light continues they fall away even as the morning clouds before the face of the sun, and the intellect of her familiar remaineth free and full of certainty.

50. (*Canz.* v., '*Io sento si d'Amor la gran possanza.*') I am in service, and when I think to whom, yea what she is, then utterly am I content; for man may do good service though against the will.[1] And if my youth rob me of grace, I await the time that shall have stronger claim; if but my life defend itself so long.

But the greater his efforts to look upon her unveiled face, the deeper her reserve, and the more obstinately she envelops herself in ever thicker folds.

51. (*Canz.* viii., '*Amor, tu vedi ben che questa donna.*') Love, thou dost well perceive that this lady doth at no season heed thy power, which is wont to lord it over other fair ones. And when she was aware she was my mistress, by thy ray which shineth on my face, she made herself the mistress of all cruelty.

XIII. Afterwards, in the *Divine Comedy*, Dante comes to see that the human spirit can never attain to knowledge of eternal truths by following its own independent path.

52. (*Purg.* iii. 34.) 'Mad is he whoso doth hope our reason may traverse the infinite path which one substance in three persons holds. Be satisfied, O human race, with *quia*; for had ye had the power to see the whole, no need had been for Mary to bring forth. And thou hast seen such ones in fruitless longing, whose desire—eternally given them to wrestle with—had then been stilled. I speak of Aristotle, and of Plato, and of many mo'— And here he stooped his brow, and said no more, and abode troubled.

53. (*Par.* xix. 64.) There is no light save such as cometh from that serene which is ne'er troubled. All else is darkness; shadow, or venom of the flesh.

The teachings of the wise men of this world are at feud one with the other, and bring confusion instead of giving light.

54. (*Par.* xxix. 85.) Ye on earth walk not upon one path in your philosophy; so doth love of appearance and the thought that it begets transport you.

[1] *i.e.* against the will of the person served.—ED.

The sight becomes dimmed, not intensified, by the study of human wisdom, and the apprehension of divine truth becomes yet harder than before.

55. (*Purg.* xxxiii. 82.) 'Wherefore doth thy longed-for speech soar so far above my sight, that the more it striveth after it the more it loseth it?' 'It is,' she said, 'that thou mayst recognise that school which thou hast followed, and mayst see how far it teacheth thee to follow my discourse, and mayst see that your way is as far distant from the divine, as earth is severed from that heaven that speedeth most exalted.'

Hence Beatrice praises King Solomon, because instead of demanding solutions of philosophical problems, of the nature of those discussed by the poet in the *Convivio* (cf. above, No. 17, and *Conv.* ii. 15, 16) he prayed for divine wisdom.

56. (*Par.* xiii. 94.) I have not so spoken but that thou mayst see that he (Solomon) was king, and asked for wit that he might be sufficient as a king. Not to know the number wherein the moving powers up here exist, nor whether from a necessary and a contingent a necessary may ever be inferred; not whether we must grant that a first-moved exists, nor whether in a semicircle may be inscribed a triangle with no right angle.

On the bypath he had felt himself a slave. Beatrice had set him free, leading him back to revealed truth; and at the close of the great poem his only wish is to remain free from like errors for the remainder of his life.

57. (*Par.* xxxi. 85.) Thou hast drawn me from a slave to liberty, by all those paths, by all those methods by which thou hadst the power of doing this. So guard then thy munificence in me, that my soul which thou hast now made sound may, pleasing in thy sight, untie it from the body.

58. (*Par.* xxxiii. 34.) And further do I pray thee, Queen, who canst that which thou wilt, that thou keep his affections sound after so great a vision.

Unless I deceive myself to a degree which seems almost incredible, the passages given above, taken word for word

from the poet's three great works, fully bear out the propositions to which they are attached. That is to say—to summarise once more—that after Beatrice's death Dante was drawn aside from her memory, which stood for him as the symbol of a pure devoutness, by another love. This second love the poet expressly asserts (whether truly or falsely) to have been the love of philosophical speculation. But his long service brings no peace, and at last he turns again to Beatrice, who has now revealed herself to him as the enlightened knowledge of God and of Divine things which is fully equipped for its own defence.

M. Klaczko, while emphatically opposing this interpretation, declares (p. 429): 'What constitutes the chief attraction of M. Witte's system is its perfect symmetry, the beautiful order it brings into Dante's works, the ingenious idea of assigning to each of Dante's three works a different epoch and regarding each as a distinct motive in the spiritual development of that memorable genius, making the *Vita Nuova* the monument of a naïve and childlike faith, the *Convito* that of doubt and revolt, and finally the *Divine Comedy* the imposing and symbolic edifice erected to repentance and conversion "by the hands of heaven and earth."'

What then are the reasons for combating it?

In the first place, it is objected that the account in the *Vita Nuova* of Dante's nascent attachment to the gracious lady who promises him comfort is far too vivid and life-like to be volatilised into a mere frigid abstraction. Besides, the study of Philosophy, which, according to the definite testimony of the *Convivio*, occupied several years, cannot be compressed within the 'certain days' to which the *Vita Nuova* limits this period of unfaithfulness. Wegele, who has completely changed his view in the interval between his first edition (see p. 104) and his second (see p. 107), says, with reference to the *Vita Nuova*: 'We hold that the later contradictory and allegorising accounts of the *Convito* are not

strong and clear enough to overthrow the simpler and more transparent record of the *Vita Nuova*.' He adds: 'Witte develops a different view, trying to reconcile the contradictory accounts of the poet's defection from Beatrice given in the *Vita Nuova* and the *Convito*, whereby the clear and definite words of the *Vita Nuova* get scant allowance.' Wegele, from his point of view, should have said 'are stretched too far,' for the only considerable discrepancy lies in the fact that the 'certain days' of unfaithfulness in the *Vita Nuova* are stretched to years in the *Convivio* and the *Comedy*. The parallel passages given above under No. I. amply prove that in other respects the two works, far from contradicting each other, record the series of events step for step in the same fashion. It is true that the *Convivio* alone gives us the allegorical key which is wanting in the *Vita Nuova*, and on the other hand only the latter tells of the poet's return to the thought of Beatrice alone. This however, I venture to hold, simply means that Dante did not write the same book twice with different titles, but wrote two different books, from different points of view, connected with the same events. But I can by no means admit that there is any real contradiction between the testimony of the *Vita Nuova* and the inferences deducible from the *Convivio* and *Divina Commedia* even in the matter of these 'certain days.' The expression is entirely vague, much like the '*modicum*' of *Purg.* xxxiii. 10, 12, or as we Germans might speak of an event 'der jüngsten Tage,' though years had elapsed since it occurred. But even if the account of the poet's second love given in the *Vita Nuova* did contradict that in the *Convivio*, the predominance which Wegele and the others would assign to the former would be somewhat hard to justify. In the *Vita Nuova* the second love is but an episode, lightly touched on in four short chapters, in connection with the real purpose of the book, which is the glorifica-

tion of Beatrice. On the other hand it is the specific subject of the *Convivio*, and therefore the far fuller account contained therein should be taken as the more trustworthy.

My opponents find the account in the *New Life* stamped so clearly with the marks of direct human reality that even Dante himself cannot disembody it into an allegory for them. I might answer that a morbid and brooding Tasso might indeed transform a once living sensation into a feeble allegory, but not so a man of such perfect sanity as Dante. But why should we not fall in with our opponents' contention, and plead guilty to the charge of credulity in allowing the poet to convince us that the *gentil donna* who awakened his second love was not a woman of flesh and blood, but Philosophy herself?—We smile at the old wife of Ravenna who saw, in the poet's dark complexion and frizzled beard, the effects of the fires of Hell through which he had just passed. It would have argued little wisdom to point out to her the physical and other reasons which made it impossible for a living man to abide in Hell, to say nothing of reaching the middle of the earth in four-and-twenty hours! Yet had she still persisted in her superstition it had been easy to direct her attention to the passages in the *Vita Nuova* in which Dante himself refers to his journey as a vision only. Conclusive! But for all that the good woman was in the right. For the poet of the *Divine Comedy* demands once for all that while the reader is studying his work he shall surrender himself to the fiction that he, Dante, with his mortal body, descended into Hell and ascended the Mountain of Purgation, and shall quietly set aside all the irresistible proofs that this cannot be the actual fact.—Let us leave our opponents, then, in the undisturbed conviction that the *gentil donna* who turned Dante's love aside from Beatrice was originally some fair Florentine maiden, and not the embodiment of an abstract Science, just in the same sense

that the poet was really seated at his study table all the time of his supposed journey through the nether regions. But even so we must in both cases alike adopt the fiction which Dante makes so strong and life-like, in order rightly to follow the concatenation of Dante's ideas. The *Convivio*, even in the unfinished state in which its author left it, is a work of vast compass, and characterises a distinct phase of the poet's mental development. We can only weave it into its place amongst his other writings by taking it in the sense authorised by himself.[1]

Far more trenchant, however, is a further objection which has been specially insisted on by M. Klaczko. He expresses the main idea as follows (pp. 404, 408): 'In Dr. Witte's hands the great poet of the fourteenth century is suddenly transformed into the Faust and the Manfred of the nineteenth,—a reconciled Faust and a repentant Manfred we admit,—but for all that one of those fiends of doubt, as Goethe called them. . . . The resemblance is far too close. We must be on our guard against all anachronisms. . . . Quite unintentionally no doubt Dr. Witte attributes philosophical ideas and sentiments to the fourteenth century Florentine which are

[1] Dr. Witte seems to need an interpreter in this passage, as the counter analogies that will present themselves to the reader may well overpower those analogies on which the author is dwelling. His argument is: 'Let us grant (for the sake of argument) that the "Donna Gentile" was originally and literally a Florentine maiden. The case will then stand:—Dante *really* loved a fair lady, and he *really* sat at his desk when he wrote the *Comedy*. But he *tells* us that it was Philosophy he loved, and he *tells* us that he actually went to Hell and Purgatory. Now it is in these fictions that he gives us his real history and experience. They are therefore the only important things, and we must accept them in order to understand his work. We are therefore to *regard* him as having loved (not an earthly maiden but) Philosophy, and as having been (not at his desk but) in the Unseen World. It is beside the mark to prove to us that we are accepting fiction and neglecting fact. The fiction is the only fact we are concerned with.' The reader who has already read the text with sufficient care to disentangle its meaning will, I hope, pardon the impertinence of a note.—Ed.

really due to his interpreter, and indeed are proper to our own period of history. We, of course, have long been accustomed to think of reason as opposed to faith, and to regard philosophy as the avowed enemy, or at best the doubtful friend, of religion. . . . But was it so in the Middle Ages, in Dante's century, in the period of St. Thomas and St. Bonaventura?'

The most obvious answer is, that in the face of such distinct evidence as we have collected above as to Dante's own conception of the relation between Philosophy and Theology, we do not need, for our purpose, so much as to inquire what the attitude of the fourteenth century in general was. If we found that Dante's mind had outstripped his contemporaries in this as in so many other directions, and that he was alone in his own age in developing the contrast between faith and the spirit of inquiry, we should have to accept the fact.

But we may add that this contrast is as old as positive religion itself,[1] that it has never been smothered, and well-nigh least of all in the second half of the Middle Ages. From the time of the Crusades, and still more after the rise of the Hohenstaufens, rank unbelief, railing against the Most Holy, and unvarnished materialism were widespread both in East and West.[2]

The Guelfs regarded the Ghibellines as unbelievers of this type, who had gone to complete perdition in the footsteps of their vaunted Emperor Frederick II. I have already shown in the supplement to the fifth essay[3] that this sceptical spirit had taken a more refined form, and

[1] 'The struggle between Christianity and human wisdom is the secret of universal history.'—GOETHE.

[2] Ernest Renan, *Averroës et l'Averroïsme*, p. 223: 'Frankly unbelieving thought, not the rejection of this or that dogma, but the belief that all religions are on a par, and are all impostures, does not take a pronounced form till the thirteenth century.'

[3] Not translated in this volume. It contains a refutation of the idea that Dante belonged to some heretical or masonic fraternity.—ED.

had put on a philosophic garb, in this very city of Florence, in the widespread sect of the Epicureans to which many prominent men personally near to our poet belonged.[1] But of course I could not for a moment allow (as is obvious from what I have said in the pages referred to) that Dante ever belonged to either of these types of unbelievers, or was even attracted towards them.

But side by side with this open negation and hostility towards religion, the Middle Ages knew another philosophy, which claimed express connection with the Church and announced itself as her true champion, but with which the Church herself could not make common cause. Now, it was just with this philosophy that the great spiritual movements from the ninth to the middle of the thirteenth century were concerned. The task of this long period was, as Scotus Erigena had put it, to show that the true Religion was the true Philosophy, and *vice versa*.[2] It is true that Anselm of Canterbury,[3] modifying Isaiah's saying, 'If ye believe not ye shall not abide,' declares that 'if ye believe not ye shall not understand,' but Abelard already speaks of knowledge as a protection against blind belief,[4] and later schoolmen, especially those known as '*puri philosophi*,' while aiming at agreement with scriptural doctrine, yet constructed their theories on completely *a priori* principles without appeal to Biblical tradition.[5] Moreover, from the time when that part of Aristotle's *Organon* which

[1] Ozanam, *Dante et la Philos. Cathol.*, 2 edit. p. 48: 'From the year 1115 onwards the Epicureans were sufficiently numerous in Florence to constitute a formidable faction and to provoke sanguinary struggles. . . . These irreligious doctrines were eager to reduce themselves to practice in philosophic voluptuousness. They were not without their poets either.'

[2] Erdmann, *Grund. d. Gesch. d. Philosophie* (1866), i. 249.

[3] *De fide trinitatis*, cap. ii.

[4] Cf., however, his fine utterances in the *Theologia Christiana*. Neander, *Gesch. d. christl. Religion*, v. 746 *sq*. [Trans. viii. (1852) 125].

[5] Even Anselm had pursued this course in the actual development of his treatises.

had long been known, was supplemented by his *Analytics* and other writings, he became to these philosophers an authority of equal or even superior weight to that of Scripture or the Fathers. And this branch of scholasticism became still more independent of the doctrine of the Church when David of Dinant, Alexander of Hales, and others, had found room by Aristotle's side for his Arabic and Jewish editors. 'They looked upon it as their task to incorporate in the scholastic philosophy the whole substance of purely Greek wisdom which Aristotle, the arch-heathen, had concentrated in himself. Nor did they fail (as Philo and the Fathers did) to perceive that this wisdom sprang from quite a different source to that of the Church's teaching. On the contrary, they emphasised this fact. As if Aristotle himself were not unchristian enough, they had recourse to Moslem and Jewish commentators to unlock the real meaning of his doctrines.'[1] Against such a philosophy the Victorine Walter of Mauretania might well appeal to the apostolic word,[2] 'Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God—' (cf. also *Coloss.* ii. 8). An ecclesiastical reaction against this tendency could not be long delayed. In the first decades of the thirteenth century the Church turned not only against the non-Christian commentators of Aristotle and the propagators of their teaching, especially Almarich of Bena and David of Dinant, but also against the text of the Aristotelian writings themselves. And so came the sentence of condemnation pronounced by the Council of Paris in 1209, followed by that of the fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

But though the matter had inevitably come to open

[1] Erdmann, *op. cit.*, 256, 272, 280, 306, 307, 320, 327.
[2] 1 *Cor.* i. 20.

war, the Church by no means looked upon her victory as assured. It was only the unparalleled efforts of the two newly constituted orders, fighting the enemy with his own weapons, and carrying the seat of war into his own territory, the lecture-halls of the Universities, that succeeded in repelling the attack, and even turning the enemy's artillery upon himself. This truly colossal labour was performed by the Franciscan Bonaventura and, in still greater measure, by the Dominicans Albert of Cologne (the Great) and Thomas Aquinas. They appropriated the whole philosophical apparatus of the Peripatetics, of the Jewish and Mohammedan commentators of Aristotle and of their nominally Christian disciples, and forged it into such compact and closely-jointed armour for the Catholic Church that for centuries afterwards it seemed that every weapon must glance off it and fall harmlessly to the ground.[1] As Albert had brought Avicenna within the range of Latin literature, so Thomas imported Averroës, partly to confute and partly to utilise him. So complete was the victory of this orthodox scholasticism that it became possible to use in the schools, without suspicion, books which had once been reputed heretical, such as Gilbertus Porretanus' *Liber de sex Principiis*, and the booklet *De Causis*, which was perhaps of Jewish origin. It is true that even this victory could not prevent the rise of a Nominalism unfriendly to the Church, as seen in Duns Scotus, William of Occam, and other ultra-Franciscans, but these phenomena do not belong to the circle that at present claims our attention.

Nothing could be more natural than for the phases through which the mental development of a period of history passed to be reflected in the greatest mind of the century. And however inadmissible the idea that Dante ever gave even temporary adhesion to a heresy inimical to

[1] *Par.* xi. 28, xii. 37, 97.

the Church, or to religion generally, it would appear by no means strange if he too had trodden the path along which Anselm had already set out to unfold the eternal truths by the light of pure reason as if there were no Holy Scripture; the path along which the *Philosophi Puri* had pressed ever farther, till they reached the extreme position we have already described.

Philosophy appeared to Dante as a pitying comforter, even as she had appeared to his teacher Boethius, when he lay in prison accused of a capital offence. But it is not the ancient dame in whom 'the last of the Romans' thinks to recognise his foster-mother who appears to Dante. It is the Philosophy of the schoolmen, rejuvenated by the fostering rays of Christendom, who promises with her shield to protect faith against the attacks of doubt. 'And so closely is Speculation in this form allied to Faith that, even as she uses her language so does she seem to resemble her in outward form.[1] Far, then, from refusing to accept the truths of religion unless they can stand before the tests of philosophy, Dante and his guide recognise in principle that those truths rest on a higher and independent basis. When Dante (in the *Convivio*) connects the different sciences with the different spheres as their symbols (cf. Nos. 38, 43, 45 above) he makes Theology correspond to the highest heaven, while the philosophical disciplines correspond to lower spheres. But pre-Thomistic philosophy was so penetrated by non-Christian elements, that despite this consciousness of dependence which she acknowledged in principle, she carried the germ of rebellion within her and by an inner necessity must needs develop it. Well might he who had so strayed from the true path

[1] *Vita N.* cap. 37 (above, No. 3): 'Whensoever this lady saw me she became of compassionate semblance, of pale hue, as though of love; wherefore many times she minded me of my most noble lady, who ever presented herself to me with the like hue.'

declare (*Inf.* i. 10): 'I know not rightly to retell how I entered there, so full of slumber was I at the point wherein I abandoned the true way.'

There are many special indications, I conceive, beyond the general proofs which I have put together above, that Dante did, as a matter of fact, tread some such path as this. Only secondary importance need be attached to the almost incessant recurrence in the *Convivio* of quotations from Aristotle, not to mention the frequent references to Arabian authorities, specifically Avicenna, Algazel, Alfraganus, and Albumassar, while in the *Monarchia* we find Averroës also appealed to.—But far greater significance belongs to the passage already cited under No. 44, wherein Dante tells us that in his philosophical researches he was confronted by the doubt of whether First Matter emanated from the divine intellect ('*se la prima materia degli elementi era da Dio intesa*'), or whether it was already in being before the creation, and at the creation merely received its 'form.' This latter doctrine (*æternitas materiæ*) was one of the most notorious heresies of Averroës and his school (*fieri est mutari*), as against the orthodox teaching of the creation out of naught (*creatio ex nihilo*).[1] One of the main tasks undertaken by Thomas Aquinas in his contest with the Arabians was to combat this very error with all his might.[2] Thus in the conflict between two opinions, one of which was indubitably orthodox (and secured the poet's adhesion as such in the *Divine Comedy*[3]), and the other heterodox, Dante was unable to make up his mind. Surely this must force us to admit that at this stage of his development the doctrine of the Church and the teaching of Averroës had equal authority in his eyes, and he might, like the scholastic *puri philosophi*, have declared that the same proposition might be theological truth and philosophical error.

[1] Renan, *Averroës*, pp. 81 *sq.* [2] Renan, *l.c.*, pp. 189 *sq.*
[3] *Par.* xxix. 22; Erdmann, *op. cit.*, 401.

The second main heresy of Averroës was that the individual and personal Intellect had only a transient existence as opposed to the universal Intellect (*intellectus activus*), which endured for ever.[1] Now it is perfectly true that the *Convivio*, at any rate, does not reveal the remotest trace of Dante's ever having harboured this frankly anti-Christian doctrine, or even having wavered between it and the orthodox view; but the manner in which he treats it in the *Divina Commedia* (*Purg.* xxv. 62 *sq.*) indicates clearly enough that there had been a time in which the authority of Scripture had not of itself been adequate to allay his doubts on this matter.

I have given above (No. 56) a passage from the *Paradiso* which refers slightingly to several scholastic problems which to the ordinary philosopher appeared to be of great importance. Now the *Convivio* concerns itself largely with this very type of problem; and Solomon is lauded in the *Paradiso* because he did *not* desire light on one of the very points which, when the *Banquet* was written, Dante thought worthy of an exhaustive discussion (ii. 5 : 11).

It is indeed noteworthy how frequently Dante repudiates in the *Comedy* views which he had defended in the *Convivio*. I have elsewhere referred to the different conceptions of the significance of noble birth in the two works.[2] —His change of opinion on the subject of the moon's spots is especially striking. In the *Convivio* (ii. 14 : 72) he says, without qualification, 'The shadow upon her [the moon] is no other than the rarity of her substance, by which the rays of the sun may not be arrested and smitten back as in her other parts.'[3] In *Par.* ii. 59 he repeats

[1] Cf. the note on my translation of *Purg.* xxv. 63.

[2] *Dante-Forschungen*, i. 82, 83 [not translated]. See *Con.* iv. 3 and *Par.* xvi.—ED.

[3] Dr. Witte would certainly have been pleased had he noted that this opinion seems to be based on two passages of Averroës, viz., *De Cœlo* ii. com. 49 and *De Substantia Orbis*, cap. 2. In the latter passage

this view in his own person, but is entirely refuted (lines 61-90) by Beatrice, and later on (xxii. 140) he smiles once more at his former error.—As touching the Milky Way, Dante does indeed allude to the Phaethon myth in the *Comedy* (*Inf.* xvii. 108), but it is only as a myth ('*come par*'); and in the decisive passage (*Par.* xiv. 97) he unhesitatingly ascribes the phenomenon to a congregation of larger and smaller stars. In the *Convivio*, on the other hand (ii. 15 : 59), he can arrive at no definite conclusion, for his authorities differ, and his two translations of Aristotle's *Meteorics* are at variance on the point. But he inclines to the view that the white shimmer is due to stars too small for us to see severally.—Again, it is worthy of special note that while in the *Comedy* and in the *Banquet* alike the poet assigns each one of the nine hosts of heaven to one of the nine lower heavens, he follows Gregory the Great's system in the former work (ii. 6), and in the latter that of the supposed Dionysius the Areopagite (xxviii. 130), with a reference (line 133) to the earlier opinion he has now rejected.[1] Hence the peculiar result that whereas the first canzone of the *Convivio* was really addressed to the 'Thrones,' in the *Paradiso* (where he had relegated them to Saturn) he is compelled to treat it as having been addressed to the 'Principi.'[2]

Finally, we must note that even after his conversion we

occur the words: 'And perhaps the celestial bodies [in general] are mottled with rare and dense, which are the causes of brightness and dulness, although they are not manifest except in the moon.' It would seem however that Dante inverts the effects of rarity and density as understood by Averroës. The correcting passage in the *Paradiso* contains a formal refutation of the Averroistic doctrine of the uniformity of the nature of the heavenly bodies.—Ed.

[1] There is a slight error here. Gregory's classification differs only in one detail from that of Dionysius. The source of Dante's far more widely divergent scheme in the *Convivio* has not, so far as I know, been traced. See Scartazzini on *Par.* xxviii.—Ed.

[2] For another instance of inconsistency as regards the 'Thrones,' see my note to the translation of *Par.* ix. 61.

find a certain affection for the most prominent of these philosophers still betraying itself in the *Comedy*. Averroës, who was in great measure the source of the movement which the Church regarded as hostile, was a favourite prototype of heresy to the painters of the fourteenth century,[1] yet he and Avicenna, the two against whom above all others Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas set their faces, are not placed among the heretics, like Epicurus, nor among the schismatics, like Mohammed and Ali, but with the philosophers of antiquity among the virtuous heathen (*Inf.* iv. 143, 144).—The abbot Joachim of Flora, whose doctrines were the main prop of those of Almarich of Bena and his disciples, and of the symbolic lore of the *Evangelium æternum* propagated amongst the Church's enemies, the Fraticelli, is found nevertheless in the heaven of the Sun beside Francis and Dominic,[2] Thomas and Bonaventura (*Par.* xii. 140). And in the same heaven we find Sigier of Brabant (*Par.* x. 136), whose very hazardous *Impossibilia* raised such a storm in the Church.[3]—And finally we must note that even in the *Comedy* Dante seems to be by no means entirely estranged from those demonstrations of the divine truths which depend on reason, for when questioned by St. Peter he gives in the first rank 'proofs physical and metaphysical' (*Par.* xxiv. 133), as the foundation of his faith in a personal God above the Universe.

A further point raised by M. Klaczko I must admit to have great importance, and to call for careful consideration. If, he says, Dante had felt that the overweening spirit of inquiry had had a disastrous influence on himself, why does he not consign those who have trodden such

[1] Renan, *l.c.*, pp. 232-249.

[2] There is nothing to indicate that Francis and Dominic are in the heaven of the Sun, though it is there that their praises are sung.—ED.

[3] Ozanam, *l.c.*, pp. 59, 320-323; Vict. le Clerc, *Hist. litt. de la France*, xxi. 121, 122.

paths, and more especially those who have tempted others to stray, to some conspicuous place in hell? Or why does he not show us a single spirit in Purgatory doing penance for the rash attempt to storm heaven, which he himself had made, and repented, on earth? He records (*Inf.* xvii. 109, *Par.* viii. 126) the physical attempt to fly that brought Icarus to destruction, and tells how Ulysses' audacious resolve (*il folle volo*) to seek the land beyond the Pillars of Hercules led him to his death; but he gives no hint that he who seeks to fly beyond the intellectual Pillars of Hercules has thereby been guilty of sin. 'All this,' says M. Klaczko, 'can only be explained by the fact that this great problem of Reason in opposition to Faith was as yet unrealised in all its extent and bearing by the poet and by his age' (p. 421). Now I think the references I have given above afford adequate proof that the supposed 'fact' does not exist. Nevertheless I cannot but admit that Dante's silence remains most noteworthy. —At the same time I would begin by pointing out that the pride which seeks to attain light for itself instead of humbly waiting for enlightenment is severely reprehended in the types of Lucifer and Eve. Of the former Dante says (*Par.* xix. 46): 'Of this we are assured in that the first proud Being, who was the summit of all creation, because he would not wait for light, fell immature.' (Cf. also *Par.* xxix. 55.) Of Eve again he says (*Purg.* xxix. 23): 'Righteous indignation seized me against the hardihood of Eve, for there where earth and heaven were obedient, a woman only, and she but now formed, would not endure to abide under any veil.'

Further, we must not forget that the philosophy of that time, whatever the bypaths into which she ultimately strayed, did not by any means present herself as an *enemy* of Faith. Assuredly the more important of the schoolmen before Thomas Aquinas, an Abelard, a Gilbertus Porretanus,

and others, were perfectly sincere in their attempt to show that true Religion was the same as true Philosophy, that is, to reconcile Faith and Knowledge. And therefore even when and in so far as the Church had set aside their conclusions as erroneous, the evil will which alone is worthy of punishment was absent; and not only so, but the judgment of the Church herself had undergone a transforming process. Not only did individual philosophers become orthodox in the school of Albertus and Thomas, but the whole philosophy of the period, together with the writings of their immediate predecessors, received a sort of second baptism from the new Scholasticism which led them back to the fold of orthodoxy. The *Sentences* of Petrus Lombardus and the *de sex Principiis* of Porretanus, which had been attacked as heretical by the Victorine Walter, could be allowed as schoolbooks without protest from the Church when the later scholasticism had drenched them in Thomistic doctrines.

Now while this notable transformation was still going on the individual thinker might well observe in himself, and bear witness against, the dangers and errors into which this philosophy, walking upon her own paths (*pura philosophia*), had led him, and he might with perfect conviction declare that a return from these errors was absolutely essential to salvation,[1] and yet he could not but shrink from charging others, in whose school he had himself studied, with heresy and seduction. The boundaries were too indefinite to warrant such a verdict. He would prefer to take on his own shoulders the guilt of having followed spiritual bypaths, even as in the *Convivio* he regarded his faulty comprehension of philosophic lore as all his own fault.

The last objection raised by Klaczko, with whom Ruth

[1] *Purg.* xxx. 136: 'So low he fell that all appeals were now too scant for his salvation.'

is here at any rate in partial accord, appears to me of lesser moment. It runs: We can only admit the alleged connection between the *Vita Nuova*, the *Convivio*, and the *Commedia* if the three works were actually written within the period of the poet's spiritual development which they are said to reflect. But this assumption is contradicted by chronology (p. 405):

'We take it that the *Convito* was composed in the year 1308 or 1309, that is to say long after Dante had conceived the idea of his *Comedy* and executed the greater part of it. We must therefore suppose that long after the poet had not only recognised but traced in characters of flame all the deadly perils of Philosophy, and all the vices and sins of human Knowledge, he set about composing a work wherein that same philosophy is represented as "the true felicity of our soul, the spouse of the Emperor of heaven, his sister and his cherished daughter."... It may be answered that the poet, for aught we know, might take up for a subsidiary work a phase that the thinker had long passed through and left behind him.... But such an argument would utterly fail to do justice to the austere sincerity of Alighieri's genius; it would attribute to the impassioned but true and upright spirit of the great Florentine the slackness and want of stamina of our age.... Once convinced that the fruit of science had poisonous juices, Dante could never have written a book in her honour full of ecstatic praise of her sweetness and her savour, and declaring all who have not tasted to be "worse than dead."'

Now I accept this view of the poet's character without reservation, but I cannot for a moment admit that the chronology which M. Klaczko assumes as established, is true. As to the date of the *Convivio* indeed I am in hearty agreement with M. Klaczko.[1] Foscolo held[2] that Dante did not publish the work (though it may have been partially written earlier) till after the death of Henry VII. (1313); while Fraticelli maintained to the last[3] that while the first and third *Trattati* were written at the time

[1] Cf. *Dante-Forschungen*, ii. p. 89 [not translated. The essay contains an incidental inquiry into the date of the *Convivio*.—ED.]

[2] *Discorso sul testo ecc*, *Sec.* 98.

[3] *Dissertazione sul Convito*, in vol. iii. of Dante's *Op. Min.*

indicated by Foscolo, the second and fourth were written before the end of the thirteenth century, somewhere about the year 1298. Against both of these M. Klaczko holds with me. It is true that there are two passages the juxtaposition of which may well lead to a false conclusion. In the first chapter of the *Convivio* the writer says of himself that he is writing 'when his youth (*gioventute*) is already passed'; and elsewhere (iv. 24) he speaks of 'youth' as lasting to the close of the forty-fifth year, that is to say, in his case till the year 1310. I admit that Centofanti's attempt to escape the difficulty[1] involves a somewhat forced interpretation of the first passage. He would construe '*l'entrata di mia gioventute già trapassata*' and understand not that 'youth,' but that the 'threshold' of youth, had already been passed. But while unable to avail myself of this exit I still abide by the view already put forward by me,[2] that when a period of twenty years is in question (and this is the space of time Dante assigns to 'youth') a man standing at the close of the nineteenth year may well consider the period (as good as) past, if he is not making a mathematical or juridical statement.

We are agreed, then, that the *Convivio*, in the fragmentary condition in which Dante has left it, was finished not later than the early months of the year 1309. But the *Comedy*? It is shown in another essay[3] that the first canto of the *Divine Comedy* points to a date not earlier than Aug. 24th, 1313, and another passage in the *Inferno* (xix. 79) cannot have been written till after April 20th, 1314. Certain stories indeed are current which point to some portions at any rate of the *Comedy* having been completed at an earlier date. Such are the story of the Florentine donkey-driver who interpolated his '*Arri*' into the lines he was chanting from the poem,[4] or the account

[1] *Antologia*, No. cxxxv. [2] Note to *Dante's lyr. Gedichte*, pp. 59, 60.
[3] Essay XII. in this volume. [4] Sacchetti, *Nov.* 115.

of Dino Frescobaldi's sending the seven first cantos to Maroello Malaspina in the Lunigiana, Dante having left them behind him at the time of his banishment.[1] But these are no more than the anecdotes which the story-writers loved to cap one against another. If we hold fast to established dates, there is a space of four or five years between Dante's inditing of the last words of the *Convivio* and the beginning of the *Comedy*. And what years! The most eventful and the most fateful in the life even of this sorely tried man; the years of his loftiest hopes and his bitterest disillusionment. And so we are brought back to the verdict already pronounced by Padre Lombardi,[2] and further substantiated by Trivulzio and his co-editors of the *Convivio*,[3] that the poet had abandoned the further elaboration of the *Convivio* before he turned to the *Divina Commedia*. We may go further, and say that between the writing of the two books a deep gulf is fixed, well calculated essentially to change the poet's whole conception of life, even though he had already passed beyond the limits of youth.

But we are concerned not merely with the prose commentary, but with the poems of the *Convivio*; both those actually explained in the four books we possess, and the eleven others which the unwritten *trattati* were to expound. The poet intimates that they are all connected, as pertaining to the same love, viz. of Philosophy. Now in one of the Canzoni which is clearly shown by *Conv.* i. 12 : 86, iv. 27 : 100, ii. 1 : 34[4] to belong to the cycle, Dante speaks of himself as an exile, so that it cannot have been written before the year 1302. It is the one beginning '*Tre donne intorno il cuor mi son venute*,' and is the fourteenth according to my enumeration. The same in-

[1] Boccaccio, *Com.*, Lez. 33. [2] Note to *Par.* ii. 58.
[3] Pp. xxvi-xxviii of their original edition; Milan, 1826.
[4] *Bibliog. Krit. Einleitg. zu Dante's lyr. Ged.*, pp. xxxvi, xxxvii.

timation recurs in another (No. x., '*Amor, dacchè convien pur ch'io mi doglia*'), which it seems safe to identify as the one which the poet sent from the valley of the Upper Arno to Maroello Malaspina (though whether the celebrated lord of Giovagallo or him of Villafranca[1] is uncertain) together with a letter which is still extant. The letter unfortunately bears no date, but the places and persons mentioned scarcely allow us to place it earlier than 1307.[2] And lastly, a third Canzone, which must be taken as belonging to this cycle (xi., '*La dispietata mente chè pur mira*'), speaks of the banished poet's yearning for home, although there is nothing to enable us to fix the date more definitely.

Now all this increases the difficulty of the problem. Dante gives 1300 as the date of his journey through the Three Realms, and the *Vita Nuova*, which is very generally supposed to have been completed either in that very year (which it appears itself to indicate[3]) or a few years earlier,[4] describes the actual Vision as the subject of the great poem which Dante then first began to contemplate.[5] Now, if both the poetical text and the Commentary belong, at least in part, to a date later than 1300, it does indeed seem as if Klaczko's charge were true, and my hypothesis landed me in the monstrous assumption that Dante wrote a cycle of poems filled with enthusiastic praise of Philosophy, and

[1] See Essay VIII. in this volume.—ED.

[2] At one time (*Dante's lyr. Ged.*, p. 117 and elsewhere) I adopted the date of 1309, but I gladly acknowledge that Fraticelli's arguments against my view (*Epistole di D.*, 1862, pp. 426-29, cf. also *Canzoniere di D.*, p. 133) have convinced me.

[3] See pp. 66, 67, note.—ED.

[4] Note to *Dante's lyr. Ged.*, pp. 8, 9.

[5] In my note in the *Lyr. Ged.*, pp. 63, 64, the dates given by the *New Life* and the *Banquet* are compared together, and are pronounced not to be contradictory; much as on p. 77 of this volume. But in calculating one of the data of the *Convivio* I fell into what I now see to be a mistake. Dante says (ii. 2; see No. 7 above): 'Twice had the star of Venus returned on that her circle which makes her appear now at eve and now at morn, according to the two diverse seasons, since the passing of . . . Beatrice . . . when that gentle lady . . . first appeared to my

accompanied them with a commentary in yet more high-strung key, at a time when he had already perceived and proclaimed that the paths along which the love of Philosophy had led him were paths of error, and that he who would attain salvation must turn his back upon them.

But it is universally acknowledged that the date of the *Divine Comedy* is a fictitious one. Was the choice determined by the centennial year? The turn of a century had always made a deep impression on the human mind, and on this occasion the great Jubilee intensified it. Or was it that Priorate, big with fate, that emphasised the year to him? Be this as it may, Dante deliberately chose the year 1300 as the supposed date of his Vision; and we are by no means compelled to assume that the conversion, which finds its symbolic expression in the *Comedy*, did actually take place at the turn of the poet's life, in his thirty-fifth year. It may actually have occurred either earlier or later.

The dates we have arrived at compel us to accept the latter alternative. Whether his conversion took place independently of any external impulse, or whether it was connected with the disaster and disillusionising arising from Henry VII.'s expedition to Rome, it appears that we cannot in any case place his definitive return to the memory of the transfigured Beatrice earlier than towards the end of the

eyes accompanied by Love.' When first my notes appeared (1826) I gave the period, I cannot now say on what authority, at 348 days (p. 397). And in 1842 I repeated the statement (pp. 63 *sq.*). But Professor Boehmer has very justly pointed out to me that the passage refers to the period of the epicycle, which Alfraganus (ed. Golius, p. 65) gives at nearly 584 days, Ptolemy in the *Almegist* more precisely at 583·9 days. Two revolutions of the epicycle of Venus then, reckoning from June 9th, 1290, will bring us past the middle of August 1293. [See Appendix.—ED.] If we add the further period of thirty months, which the poet tells us in ii. 13 (see above, No. 37) elapsed before he bid farewell to his love for Beatrice, the first Canzone of the *Convivio* will fall in February 1296 (not, as I supposed, in 1295), which would leave a period of four years only for all those spiritual conflicts with which the remaining thirteen Canzoni are concerned, before the year 1300, in which the poet places his conversion.

first decennium of the fourteenth century. I say his *definitive* return, for the oftener he repeated the discovery that Philosophy had not led him to true peace, and the more painfully he must forego, time after time, the solution of some weighty problem, the more frequently and vividly would the longing for the old peace-bringing love that brought no false hopes return. The memory of that blessed time would rise before him in dream and vision, and awaken in him the wish, nay, the determination, to turn from the paths that never led to peace along which his new passion had led him. But ever again the yearning for knowledge, the restless life of party politics, and the stream of circumstance, drew him back into the old way, until at last the moment came when the wavering intention became a fixed determination, and his conversion was completed.

And now that he resolved to make this conversion articulate, and build up his great poem upon it, he must of necessity fix it to a definite date. And so (for whatever reason) he antedated it by several years, perhaps choosing the period when he had been nearest to the great resolve to which he now held fast. For the *Comedy*, which now first came into being, the choice of date was merely arbitrary. But when once it was determined on, the *Vita Nuova* too must be squared with the fiction. We may suppose that it had originally ended with the dream-vision of the fortieth chapter and the yearning raised in the poet's breast by the sight of the passing pilgrims and the message of the two damsels. But now he added the concluding chapter, and now the words became true which I find written in my MS. copy of the *Vita Nuova*: 'Some think that this little book ought to be written in front of the beginning of the book that treats of Hell.'

IV.—DANTE'S COSMOGRAPHY

A POPULAR LECTURE, 1867

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 161-182 (1879).]

I SUPPOSE you may hardly ever have listened to a lecture in this place without feeling that you had enriched the stores of your positive knowledge in some direction or other by new truth. I fear then that you will think it strange, to say the least of it, if I begin by asking you to forget, for an hour, your most laboriously acquired knowledge and take up for the nonce a standpoint long since abandoned.

I assume your knowledge of the heavenly bodies to have been laboriously acquired, and I hardly think you will challenge my assumption. Though many years have elapsed since I was first required to believe that the Sun, whom I daily saw rise, travel over the firmament, and sink to rest, stood still, while the earth which I felt so firm beneath my feet was whirling round with incredible speed, I can still feel the echo of the inward indignation with which I protested against such a monstrous fabrication.

But what if this rebellion had some higher justification than the narrow vision of a child who believes nothing but what he thinks his senses tell him? In the Universe of space and matter, the question has indeed received its answer, and I am far from countenancing the revolts that crop up from time to time against the system of the great Copernicus. But because a thing is true of the world of matter it does not follow that it is equally so of the world of mind.

In the world of matter it is all a question of masses,

The greater sweeps the lesser with it, and compels it to revolve round it at its centre. But the world of mind obeys no such physical law. All the Continents of the earth, with all the islands belonging to them, gravitate towards our little Europe. Athens, which can scarcely have had a hundred thousand inhabitants at the time of greatest prosperity, has been for thousands of years the intellectual centre for thinkers of every nation.

Well, then, although our earth is an insignificant dot in the Universe, a satellite revolving round a sun three hundred and fifty thousand times its own size, yet itself, with countless other stars, hanging upon a central sun which perhaps no mortal eye has ever seen, yet this tiny point may, for all that, be the centre of the world of mind. And as far as our powers permit us to see, it actually is so; for though our dreams may people the moon, the planets, or the fixed stars, with beings like ourselves, yet they remain mere dreams devoid of rational support.

The sacred documents of our religion are clear enough in expressing the dependent relation of the whole firmament to the earth. When the story of creation makes the Almighty say, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years, and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth'—or when Joshua commands, 'Sun, stand thou still in Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon,'—we may talk, if we choose, of an 'accommodation' to the human conceptions of those ancient days.

Not so, however, when we find the relation of all created things to the Creator determined by events which have taken place upon our earth, by the fall, the redemption, and the second coming of the Christ. The Saviour himself declares, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my

words shall not pass away.' The Apostle Peter says yet more distinctly that 'the heavens that now are, and the earth . . . have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men'; and further on he adds, 'The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.' 'But,' he continues, 'according to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

In the Middle Ages all this was united with the special conceptions of ancient astronomy, which had taken its rise amongst the great Greek astronomers of the third century before Christ, and was systematised mainly by the Alexandrian Ptolemy in the second century of the Christian era, further details being added by Arabian scholars, especially under the Sassanid dynasty in Spain. The doubts which the Samian Aristarchus had already thrown on the central position of the earth were passed over by antiquity, just as they were by the Middle Ages when propounded by the celebrated Ibn Roschd, or Averroës as we are accustomed to call him, and a little later on by Alphonso the Wise, king of Castile.

Right down into the sixteenth century the conviction remained unshaken that the earth was fixed at the middle point of the Universe. All the heavenly spheres circled round it as their centre. It was the lowest point of the Universe, towards which all bodies possessing material weight were drawn. The two heavy elements formed the body of the earth and the two light ones encompassed it; for beyond the sphere of air lay that of fire, the true home of that element towards which all upleaping flames aspire, only being kept back by the matter on which they feed. From that high region of fire the thunderstorms tore off fragments of the element, and hurled them to earth as lightning.

Far beyond the sphere of fire came the seven planets, each of which had a heaven to itself, the Moon counting as the undermost of the planets. The Sun was in the middle, between the three inner and the three outer planets, and although only reckoned as one of the planets, he was the source of light to the whole Universe, for not only our earth, and the planets (as we also believe), but the fixed stars too received their light from him. Hence the poet calls him[1] 'the greatest of all ministers of nature, who stamps the world with the virtue of the heaven, and gives the measure of time unto us.'

Beyond Saturn (the most distant planet known till the year 1781) lay the heaven of the fixed stars. Attempts had been made to number them in early times. Eratosthenes counted 675, and for more than a thousand years science rested in Ptolemy's 1022—only about a fifth of the number now given as visible to the naked eye, and less than a hundredth of the number marked on our modern astronomical maps. According to Aristotle there was nothing beyond this eighth heaven. Each heaven had a 'proper' or special motion of its own, from West to East; and as the distance from the earth, the centre of the Universe, increased, this movement became slower and slower, till the heaven of the fixed stars only revolved once in 36,000 years.

But the path of the planets as actually observed was not adequately expressed by their supposed revolution in company with the heavens called after their names. The astronomers were driven to assume for each planet a second revolution whereby it revolved round a fixed invisible point in its own (already revolving) heaven, somewhat as, according to modern astronomy, the Moon, besides accompanying the Earth in her course round the Sun, herself revolves round the Earth. This second movement of the planets was called

[1] *Par.* x. 28.

the epicyclic revolution. This theory, however fanciful and involved it may sound to us, corresponds so closely with the actual phenomena presented by the heavenly bodies, that it enabled the observer to predict every eclipse or conjunction of planets to the minute. Such accuracy was reached that in 1560, long before the new doctrine of Copernicus had gained acceptance, the punctual occurrence of an eclipse of the Sun at the moment predicted moved Tycho Brahe, then fourteen years old, with such reverence for Astronomy that he resolved from that hour to dedicate all the powers of his mind to her alone.

But the motions of these eight heavens, with their epicycles, leave unexplained just the one phenomenon which the least observant must perforce notice,—the daily rising and setting of the sun, moon, and stars. Ptolemy explained this[1] by the theory of a ninth heaven, embracing all the others, sweeping them all round (though without interfering with their own special motions) in its inconceivably swift revolution completed every twenty-four hours. It is both the source and the limit of all motion and of all change. Beyond it lies the eternal unchanging peace of God to which the Christian astronomers assigned a tenth heaven, the Empyrean, 'the heaven that is pure light; light intellectual full of love, love of the good full of joy, joy that transcends all sweetness,' as the poet describes it.[2] The ninth heaven, which the eye cannot perceive, and which is therefore called the crystalline or transparent heaven, the poet names[3] 'the royal mantle of all the

[1] Not, of course, that it had not been observed or accounted for before. But till his time it had been identified with the movement of the fixed stars. Ptolemy observed that it did not quite coincide therewith, and so separated out the 'proper' motion of the starry sphere (see above, p. 100, end of second paragraph) which corresponds to what is now known as the 'Precession of the Equinoxes.' Then he took away from the eighth sphere the function of originating the daily motion common to all, and gave it to a now first recognised ninth heaven.—ED.

[2] *Par.* xxx. 39.

[3] *Par.* xxiii. 112.

swathings of the Universe, which most burns and quickens in the breath and ways of God.'

Every one knows that this assumption of a number of heavens is not without support in Holy Scripture. In the Old Testament (as in the original Greek of the Lord's Prayer) the 'heavens' are often spoken of in the plural, and the Apostle Paul not only says that he was caught up to the *third* heaven, but evidently places the Paradise to which he was further transported, in order to hear unutterable words, beyond it.

And now that we have taken a general survey of the cosmography of the Middle Ages, let us return again to Earth, and examine its place in the Universe, by preference under Dante's guidance. We are told in the Apocalyptic vision of St. John that after the war which Michael and his angels waged against the Dragon, the 'Old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, he was cast out into the Earth, and his angels were cast out with him' (Rev. xii. 7-10). This passage was regarded not as prophecy, but as a record of what had already taken place. Under Satan's leadership certain of the angels fell. They uplifted themselves, almost as soon as they were made, against their Creator, and being overcome in the strife were thereupon hurled down to the newly-formed earth. At that time there were great continents rising above the sea in the opposite hemisphere to ours; but as Virgil tells Dante when they have arrived at the other side (the south side) of the centre of the Earth,[1] 'From *this direction* he fell down from heaven; and the land which erst spread itself out on this side the world, in terror of him, now made a veil of the ocean, and came up in our hemisphere; and (to flee him, I take it) the land which appears on this side [*i.e.* the Mount of Purgatory] left the space empty here and rushed up backwards.'

[1] *Inf.* xxxiv. 121.

Ever since then, Earth's surface, stretching from the Pillars of Hercules round to the East Indies, has been a waste of waters as yet unsailed by any who has returned to tell the tale.

One mountain alone rises out of this sea, the highest of all on earth; so lofty indeed that it towers above all changes of our atmosphere, so that there is neither rain nor snow, storm nor lightning, on its summit: and since the first pair left it it has ne'er been trodden by the foot of man. One man, indeed, set out to explore the unknown world which lay beyond the Straits of Gibraltar. It was Ulysses, who had returned from his long wanderings, but could not be at peace in his tiny fatherland. Further and further West he sailed with his companions.[1]

'Five times was rekindled, and as often quenched the light that comes down from the Moon, since we had entered on the high emprise, when there appeared to us a mountain, brown by distance, and methought it loftier than I had e'er seen one before. We were rejoiced, but soon it turned to wailing; for from that new land arose a squall and smote the foremost quarter of our vessel. Three times it made her swirl with all the waters; then at the fourth it lifted up her poop; down plunged her prow, as was the will of One, until the sea again closed over us.'

On the summit of this mountain, which is heaped like a funeral barrow above Satan, lies the *Garden of Eden*, planted by God. It is watched by the angel with the fiery sword, and is guarded from men by the wide stretch of the ocean and the precipitous sides of the mountain. Here Adam was placed and Eve was shaped by God; and from hence, within a few hours of their creation, tempted to disobedience by that same serpent, they exiled themselves.

At the exact antipodes of the Garden of Eden, and in the centre, as the Middle Ages supposed, of the inhabited world, lies Jerusalem, and the hill on which the Christ

[1] *Inf.* xxvi. 130.

bruised the head of the Old Serpent, and by his sacrificial death lifted off the curse which had spread over that hemisphere also at the fall of man.

Jerusalem lies in the middle of the *inhabited earth*, but at the Eastern limit of *Christendom*. The quadrant from Jerusalem to the Ganges is in the hands of the Heathen and Moslem. Only the Western quadrant is Christian, extending to the shores of the Atlantic, where the Apostle James, like another Hercules, erected as it were a pillar in Compostella that marks the confines alike of the Church and of the inhabited world. In the middle, again, of these Christian lands lies Rome, the burial-place of the two chief Apostles, destined from the beginning of time to be the seat of St. Peter's successors and the centre of the Church of Christ.

Jerusalem, with the crust of earth, miles in thickness, on which its walls are reared, covers and seals up a huge cavity which stretches down below it, in darkness and horror, right to the centre of the earth. Satan was hurled not merely down to the earth but deep into its bowels, even to the dead centre, the pivot of the Universe, the deepest point of all, and the furthest removed from the presence and light of God. Sin and weight answer to one another. As flame, which is not subject to the law of gravitation, tends upward to its home in the heaven of fire, so the soul, when freed from sin, rises to God, its source. But as a stone is drawn downwards by its weight, so sin drags the soul weighted by it down to the Father of sin in his dark kingdom of torment and estrangement from God. This huge cavity between the crust of the earth and its centre, where Satan abides in gruesome majesty, is Hell. It is divided into numerous circles, corresponding with the sins which meet with their reward in it; but the deeper we go the deeper is the negation of light and warmth, until finally the souls of traitors, nearest of all to Satan, are

frozen, with wailing and gnashing of teeth, into the ice whereto the waters of Hell are congealed. And these waters themselves are a product of sin. The tears extorted from the sinners, the blood shed by tyrants and murderers, all the filth of the sinful world, flow down below by secret conduits and are then transformed into instruments of torment.

This nether world of unrepentant sinners is closed upon them for ever. Since Christ descended into Hell to preach to the spirits in prison (1 *Peter* iii. 19) and to release the patriarchs, the number of spirits in Hell has indeed increased, from day to day, but not one has ever been able to free himself again from its fetters.

On the other hand, the ban which closed the gate of Eden is done away by the death of Christ; not indeed for the living, who may be pious but are not sinless, but for the Christian souls that have expired in faith and penitence. The Roman Catholic doctrine teaches, it is true, that even these still bear the stain of earthly sin; but they are permitted to wash it away by prayer and penance till at last they become worthy, like the first pair before the fall, of the Earthly Paradise. So this mount of purification, Purgatory, forms the counterpart to the funnel of Hell. The circles of Hell begin with mere defect of the true faith, and descend through the lighter sins which are still worthy of pity, to heavier and still heavier ones, ending in rebellious hatred of God. In Purgatory we pass from repentance, as yet inadequate, first through the heavier sins and then through the errors which mislead the nobler instincts, from which indeed they rise.

In the Southern hemisphere a beautiful constellation, invisible in ours, lights the souls who come thither for purification. The poet, on his arrival there, says:[1]

'I turned me to the right hand, and heedfully I gazed upon

[1] *Purg.* i. 22.

the other pole, and saw four stars ne'er looked upon save by the primal folk. The heaven seemed to gladden in their flames. O widowed region of the North, since thou art shorn of looking upon them!

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Amerigo Vespucci, and subsequently Andrea Corsali, enjoyed the magnificent spectacle of the Southern Cross, and ever since it has been frequently assumed (as it was by Vespucci himself) that the four stars of the *Divine Comedy* signify this jewel of the Southern skies. Some have imagined that Dante anticipated the knowledge of them by the spirit of prophecy, and others have supposed that Pisan or other navigators brought home from their wanderings the report of this constellation. In recent times Alexander von Humboldt, and subsequently Oscar Peschel, have thought the question worthy of special discussion. As a matter of fact there was no need to assume that Dante heard the report from otherwise unknown voyagers who had been driven as far as Cape Verde or beyond; for soon after 1290 Marco Polo had visited Java and Sumatra, whence such an observant student of the heavens could not fail to note the imposing spectacle of the Southern Cross. Now when Dante wrote the second part of his poem, Polo, who was never weary of recounting his adventures, had been back in Venice, his native city, for twenty years. It is therefore highly probable, at any rate, that in describing the four stars the poet had in mind the wonderful constellation of which he had heard. It remains unquestionable, however, that here as elsewhere he has given an allegorical meaning to actual phenomena, and in this case the symbolic meaning is the most prominent.

For the four stars are taken by him to mean what we call the four moral or cardinal virtues, Wisdom, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude. In the progress of the ascent these four morning stars find their counterpart in three

evening stars, which represent the three Christian or theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity.[1]

The spirits on the Mount of Purgatory likewise suffer torment; but it is now penance, not punishment. And the higher we ascend the more endurable the sufferings grow. The very climbing itself, which at first is toilsome and breathless, becomes painless, nay, pleasant, as when a ship is carried down stream by a favourable breeze. The guilt washed away by penance drips down from this mountain and gnaws its way into the bowels of the earth, there to swell the volume of the waters of Hell.

At the summit of the mountain we find the Garden of Eden, depicted in glowing colours, after the scriptural account, with all manner of trees beautiful to look on, and good for food, with the breath of morning whispering among their branches and birds plying their art in varying melody. But it is not rain nor dew that fosters the growth of the trees and flowers of this garden. The moist exhalations of earth and the dews which they deposit, the fury of storm and thunder, all these bear the character of change, for which there is no room in Paradise. Streams of living water springing up in Eden irrigate the garden. And as the breeze, following the motion of heaven, passes from East to West through the tree-tops and strikes the shrubs and grasses, it bears away their seeds, and strews them here and there over the face of the earth.[2]

'The smitten plant hath power to impregnate the breeze with its virtue, and the breeze as it circles scatters it around. And the rest of Earth, according as itself and its heaven makes it worthy, conceives and bears diverse growths of diverse virtues. Henceforth it should not seem a wonder, this being heard, should any plant take root there without visible seed.'

My respected hearers will perceive how the poet seems in these lines to have a premonition of the microscopic

[1] *Purg.* viii. 89. [2] *Purg.* xxviii. 109.

fungus spore, pollen, and infusorial germs, which play so prominent a part in the natural science of our day.

Where then in this garden, with its beautiful trees full of pleasant fruits, is man, for whom God planted it all? We have seen how Christ has reopened it to the spirits of the redeemed purified by penance; but their dwelling-place is no longer on earth, no, not even in the Earthly Paradise. They have lost their sins, and with them their material weight; and were they now to cling to earth, it would be as strange as if a living flame, instead of rising upwards, were to creep along the ground.[1] The sinless souls are not retained even by the joys of the Earthly Paradise, but rise upwards to Heaven.

But heaven, too, is an organised whole, with degrees and distinctions, according to the particular qualities for which each spirit was conspicuous. The seven grades of the punishment of Hell,[2] and the seven terraces of the mount of Purgatory, find their counterpart here in the spheres of the seven planets. A separate company of the blessed is assigned to each; those who vowed themselves to God are in the chaste Moon; in Mercury are those who strove after intellectual perfection; in Venus, those who were inflamed with heavenly love; in the Sun, the source of all light, the theologians who sank deep into the light of God; in Mars, those who fought for Christ; in Jupiter, the source of all justice according to the Ancients, the righteous rulers; and finally, the holy hermits in Saturn, who pursues his slow course far removed from the other planets.[3]

The Greek astronomers had handed down the belief that since the Sun was far larger than the Earth, the shadow cast in space by the latter would taper to a point, and they

[1] *Par.* i. 139.

[2] Not reckoning the Virtuous Heathen and the Heretics, who stand in a sense outside the sevenfold ethical division of Hell and raise the total number of circles to nine.—ED.

[3] See Appendix.—ED.

calculated that it would just reach to the sphere of Venus. Beyond Venus there is nothing but the pure light of heaven, but the memories and lighter blemishes of earth extend up to her orb. We spoke just now of errors, which, sinful though they are, yet bear witness to nobility of soul. In the same way virtues, even while pleasing to God, may have some earthly alloy. The Moon is the symbol of chastity, but she is not spotless, and her inconstancy reveals itself in ceaseless change. So, too, the bride of Christ, instead of staking all on the preservation of her vow, may yield to external pressure. Yet if her will has but remained faithful, her weakness will not be imputed to her, and she will yet attain to bliss. The scholars, orators, and poets to whom Mercury is assigned are not free from the thirst for personal renown; and, again, spiritual love may be twin sister to her earthly counterpart. Thus these three planets represent lower degrees of blessedness, but all Heaven is Paradise, and the spirits in these spheres do not feel themselves less blessed because of their lower place. One of them answers the poet's question on this very point:[1]

'Brother, the virtue of love quiets our will, for it makes us wish only for that we have, and feel no other thirst. Did we desire to be more aloft, our longings were at discord with His will who decrees we should be here. . . . So that the way we rank from threshold to threshold through the realm, pleases all the realm even as its king, who draws our wills in his. And his will is our peace; it is that sea to which all moves that it creates or that nature makes.'

The harmonies which strike the poet's ear as soon as he has passed the sphere of fire do not arise, then, as Cicero once made his Scipio dream, from the rush of the planets through the ringing ether, but from the songs of praise raised by the blessed spirits, differing in the different heavens according to their gifts.

[1] *Par.* iii. 70.

But while the planets are peopled now with blessed spirits, this could not have been so, according to the Church, either in heathen times or under the Old Covenant. Were they then nothing before the redemption but soulless balls of fire? For the Christian poet could not offer his tribute of praise to the silent majesty with which Helios guided his golden chariot; and neither have I, let me confess it, ever been able to feel the lofty poetry which our own Schiller finds in the thought of a driver following the same road day in, day out, for one millennium after another, even though he had a golden chariot!

In the conception of the Middle Ages, however, the stars were anything but soulless balls of fire. Aristotle himself had said that where motion was there must life be also, for only death is motionless. The most perfect form of movement, in that it is capable of endless continuance, is the circular motion exemplified in the movement of the heavens. Now the starry or highest heaven, by whose movement that of all the others is conditioned, is moved by a supernal Being proceeding from God, an Intelligence. Elsewhere Aristotle adopts the popular idea which named the planets after the Gods and assumed other beings, besides this supreme Intelligence, who ruled the special motions of the planets. The Neoplatonists, followed by the Arabians, expanded these suggestions, until finally the schoolmen of the thirteenth century worked them up into such a form as fitted them to become an organic part of the Christian conception of Heaven.

The 'Intelligences' became 'Angels,' whose various hierarchies ruled the nine revolving heavens. The motions of these heavens are, as already indicated, manifold, but each movement is guided by one or more angels. The presiding spirits of the planets, however, perform their functions in a fashion widely differing from that attri-

buted in heathen times to the deities from whom the planets took their names. Helios, in his golden chariot, turned his gaze earthwards, now on Clymene, on Daphne, or some other nymph, now on the wide-browed cattle of his friend Admetus. The moon-goddess Diana let her eye rest on the fair sleeper Endymion, while the warm-blooded Venus now looked in the Firmament on Mars or Mercury, and now smiled on Adonis, or descended to the groves of Ida, where the longing Anchises awaited her.

But in the system of the mediæval Church the eyes of those who rule the stars are ever directed upwards. The whole being of the legions of angels consists in losing themselves in God. The task of each one is to apprehend God's essence in his own special way, under the special aspect and in the special direction indicated individually to him. It is because of this apprehension that they bear the name of *Intelligences*. Here, as usual, the Schoolmen over-refine, and are over-confident in exhaustively apportioning the different aspects under which God is contemplated by the hierarchies and choirs of angels, as elaborated by the inventive faculty of the ancient Church from the faint suggestions of Scripture.

Next to the Empyrean, which embraces the whole of creation and is itself the very fulness of God, comes, as we saw above, the transparent crystalline heaven invisible to the eye. It is the heaven of the Seraphim, who see deepest of all the angels into the secrets of the Creator. And each of the constituent parts of this heaven, each indwelling seraph, has such yearning toward each point of the Empyrean—in other words, such longing to comprehend the whole being of God,—that this heaven revolves ceaselessly under the canopy of the highest with a speed unapproached by any other, completing its revolution in four-and-twenty hours, and sweeping all the lower heavens

with it. And it is this same thirst to apprehend which causes the motion of all the spheres. Wherefore it is said in the schools: 'By *apprehending* the Intelligences move the Heavens and the Planets.'

But while the eyes of the guiding spirits of the Heavens are directed upward, the power of their knowledge radiates all around them, and into the lower spheres. Hence the often-recurring image by which they are spoken of as Mirrors of God. The poet says in one place:[1]

'He whose wisdom transcendeth all, made the heavens, and so gave them guides that every part glows upon every part with even distribution of its light.'

And elsewhere:[2]

'The primal light which over-rays it all (*i.e.* the angelic nature) is received thereby in as many ways as are in number the splendours to which it is revealed. Wherefore, since affection conforms to the act of apprehension, the sweetness of love boils or is tepid in them diversely. Behold now the height and breadth of the Eternal Worth, since it hath made itself so many mirrors wherein it breaks itself, remaining in itself one as before.'

This conception of the heavenly bodies, each receiving from above and radiating and attracting below, is no other than a spiritual version of Newton's law of gravitation, on which the equilibrium and movement of the heavenly bodies depends.[3] 'These orders all gaze upwards, and so work victoriously downwards that all are drawn and all do draw towards God.'

But this conception and reflection of theirs is not confined to spiritually apprehending and illuminating. Inseparably united with it, and with the revolution of the heavens which it causes, is the radiation of divine powers and influences even down to our Earth. Birth, growth, and

[1] *Inf.* vii. 73. [2] *Par.* xxix. 136. [3] *Par.* xxviii. 127.

decay follow one another on earth in accordance with eternal laws. The elements combine into all the manifold forms of the three realms of Nature. But the degree of perfection with which each individual creature comes into existence and develops itself depends upon the heavenly influences. While even the most favourable constellations are powerless to give a higher form to bad material and unfit seed, yet even noble seed comes to naught under adverse stars. The manifold combinations brought about by the endless motions of the heavenly spheres and the bodies they support are the essential condition of an organised and organic life; for uniformity in the individuals would preclude it. Like these changing influences of the stars, which defy all human interference, are the workings of Fortune, whose wheel may be likened to the circles in which the planets roll.[1]

'In like manner hath he ordained to earthly splendours a general administrix and guide, in due time to interchange fallacious blessings from folk to folk, from one class to another, beyond resistance of the wit of man. Wherefore one folk hath sway, another languisheth, after Her judgment who doth lie concealed like to a serpent in the grass. . . . This is she who is so crucified just by the ones who ought to give her praise, but give her wrongfully their blame and ill report. But she is blessed and heareth not this, exultant with the other primal creatures doth she roll her sphere, and, blessed, doth rejoice.'

Now all these combinations of the elements under the influences of the stars, these 'contingencies,' as the Schoolmen called them, were intended and *foreseen* by God; but it is only indirectly that they *proceed* from him. The only thing that, in the progress of creation, daily and hourly proceeds immediately from God, is the Soul which he breathes into every single child before its birth. This is why all 'contingencies' are destined to be resolved and to fall to pieces. They are given over to change, decay, and destruction.

[1] *Inf.* vii. 77.

But the human soul, which emanates from God himself, is immortal and eternal. On the journey through the planets the poet's guide says to him :[1]

'The Good which moves and satisfies all the realm thou art climbing, frames its providence into a virtuous power in these great bodies ; and not only are created things provided for in the mind that in itself is perfect, but they together with their means of safety. Wherefore whatsoe'er this bow doth shoot, lights as disposed to a provided end, even as a thing directed to its mark. Were this not so, the heaven thou art traversing would produce such effects as make not works of art but ruins. . . . The circling nature which is seal to the mortal wax, plies its art well, but maketh no distinction betwixt one abode and other. Wherefore it comes that Esau parts from Jacob in the seed ; and from so base a father is Quirinus born he is assigned to Mars. The begotten nature would ever make its path like to its generators, did not divine provision overrule.'

And in like manner he says elsewhere :[2]

'Seldom does human goodness mount up through the branches ; and this He wills who gives it, that from Him it may be asked for.'

Are we then to believe in astrological fatalism? Are the nature, the virtues, and the vices of each individual and his lot in life unconditionally fixed by the stars, under whose influence he came into the world? Do the consequences of our decisions and our actions depend on the positions of the planets?

This belief was widely held during the Middle Ages, and my hearers will remember how long it maintained itself ; so long indeed that it has many echoes even in our modern forms of speech. Dante most emphatically contradicts it :[3]

'Ye mortals refer all causes to the Heaven, as though it swept all with it of necessity. If it were so, free choice in you would not exist, and there would be no justice in your reaping joy for

[1] *Par.* viii. 97-108, and 127-135.
[2] *Purg.* vii. 121.
[3] *Purg.* xvi. 67.

good and misery for evil. The heaven does give rise to impulses within you—I say not all of them, but if I did say all, yet light is given you for goodness and for wickedness, and free will, which if it endure the toil in its first conflicts with the heaven then if it be well nurtured conquers all. To Greater Power and to Better Nature ye lie in free subjection, and that it is which doth create in you the mind o'er which the heaven hath not charge. Wherefore if the present world goes off the track, in you lieth the cause; in you it must be sought.'

We have seen the Intelligences moving the nine heavens and thereby bringing their influence to bear on the destinies of earth. Are they then confined each to his special heaven as an actual dwelling-place?—We must answer this question in the negative. Each angel enjoys, in the Empyrean, the immediate presence and sight of God, and it is only the forces radiating from him and from his apprehension of God which are reflected in the stars. Nor is it otherwise with the souls of the blessed. The Heaven of highest light is the true home of all, all are permitted to gaze on the face of God, only the measure of sight is determined by their capacity and deserts, and the heaven to which they are, so to speak, outwardly assigned,[1] is a symbol of this measure.

And thus, spiritually and ultimately, the whole of this cosmography comes to be, as it were, reversed. We have been depicting the whole God-filled heaven, wherein is his city and his lofty throne, as the outermost, embracing all the others. But again, God is the sole kernel of the Universe, round which the whole creation must revolve in a widening series of circles. God, says one of the Schoolmen, is indeed a circle; but a circle whose centre is everywhere and its bounding circumference nowhere. Thus, if we picture the heaven of God as stretching beyond all conceivable extension, yet may God equally be conceived

[1] And apparently assigned only on the special occasion when they come to meet Dante and his guide, *Par.* iv. 28 *sq.*—ED.

'as the absolutely indivisible unit, the mathematical point which occupies no space at all. The poet depicts this inverted conception, if we may so call it, thus:[1]

'A point I saw that rayed out light so keen that the sight on which it blazed must needs close itself against its piercing power. And whichever star seems smallest seen from here, had seemed a moon compared with it, as star compares with star. Perchance so close as Halo seems to gird the light that paints her when the sustaining moisture is most dense, e'en at such distance round the point a fire-circle whirled so rapidly it had surpassed that motion which most swiftest girds the Universe; and this was by another girt around, that by a third, the third too by a fourth, by a fifth the fourth, then by a sixth the fifth. Above followed the seventh, already spread so wide that Juno's messenger, complete, had been too strait to hold it. And so the eighth and ninth; and each one moved more slow according as in number 'twas more distant from the unit: and that one had its flame most clear from which the pure spark was least distant; I believe because it plunged the deepest in the truth thereof.'

Thus we have followed the poet in his ascent, and have, I hope, returned unharmed to the point whence we started, I mean to your own well-grounded conception of the construction of the Universe. For our last vision has been not alien from the teaching of Copernicus—a vision, not indeed of the planets themselves, but of the Spirits that move them, circling around the Sun, only in the place of the physical Sun the poet has placed 'the Sun of the angels,' God.

[1] *Par.* xxviii. 16.

V.—THE ETHICAL SYSTEMS OF THE INFERNO AND THE PURGATORIO

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 121-160 (1879).]

I. ANALOGIES IN THE CONFORMATION OF HELL AND PURGATORY

WE have only to compare the diagrammatic representations of Dante's Hell and Purgatory which have accompanied so many of the editions of the *Comedy* since the time of Daniello of Lucca (1568), in order to recognise a certain similarity in the conformation of the two realms. The cone of Purgatory corresponds to the funnel of Hell, so that if we inverted the former we could, as it were, drop it into the latter as into a roughly fitting sheath.[1]

The funnel is of course widest at the top, and contracts downwards towards the centre of the Earth, that is, according to Dante's Cosmography, the centre of the Universe; while the cone diminishes upwards in contracting circles from its broad basis. Thus the extreme, both of evil and of good, is reached at the narrowest point, at the conduit of the funnel below, and the summit of the mountain above. As the burden of sin draws down the guilty towards the Author of Evil, fixed at the very bottom of Hell, as to its natural goal,[2] so the repentant souls all seek the lofty heights of the Earthly Paradise, where, their expiation completed, they regain the sinlessness forfeited by the first parents. The forest of Error, in which Dante unwittingly loses himself when he wanders from the true path, is the entrance to Hell. The 'divine forest, dense and living'

[1] Cf. *Inf.* xxxiv. 121-126.

[2] *Inf.* xxxiv. 110; *Par.* xxix. 56.

(xxviii. 2), at the summit of Mount Purgatory, in which the soul is finally cleared from all the stains of sin, may be looked on as the vestibule to the Heavenly Paradise, to which the soul rises with the full consciousness of returning salvation. As in the *Purgatorio*, so in the first canto of the *Inferno*, the poet strives to ascend a mountain to attain to the knowledge of God, but in the one case his own powers are insufficient to enable him to climb the fair hill, smiling in the rays of the morning sun, 'which is the beginning and the cause of every joy'; and in the other case the divine aid and the completion of his penitential pilgrimage bring him, without effort at last (and again at break of day [1]), to the summit of the mountain where as Beatrice tells humanity is blessed.

The ferryman of Hell, Charon, bears the lost souls in his boat across the Acheron, while in a bark guided by an angel the souls destined for the bliss of Heaven cross the wide seas from the Tiber's mouth to the strand of Mount Purgatory. Outside the proper circles of either realm are spirits standing in a peculiar relation to the true denizens. Before we reach the damned inmates of Hell we come upon the Trimmers, Celestine v. and his host of associates,[2] who are never to be admitted into Hell; and before we reach the souls in their purgation on the mount, we encounter the Procrastinators, Belacqua [3] and the rest, who may not yet join them. The verdant lea of Limbo, with its Poets, Heroes, and Sages, whose earthly fire illuminates 'a hemisphere of darkness,' [4] corresponds to the fragrant vale, covered with grasses and fairest flowers, in which the great ones of the earth [5] who allowed themselves to be drawn away by earthly cares from the thought of their soul's welfare, now sojourn in the starry light shed by the three Christian virtues.[6] In Hell the Demons guard the

[1] *Purg.* xxviii. 16. [2] *Inf.* iii. 59 [3] *Purg.* iv. 110.
[4] *Inf.* iv. 69. [5] *Purg.* vii. 73. [6] *Purg.* viii. 89.

gate of the city of Dis,[1] and in Purgatory we have the corresponding picture of the Gate of Heaven, 'St. Peter's Gate,'[2] through which the angelic doorkeeper invites the souls ready for purification to enter.[3]

Again, the order in which the sins follow each other in the economy of Hell and Purgatory is identical, at any rate as far as the first steps are concerned. The uppermost circle of Hell, *i.e.* the one next to the Limbo, holds the spirits who have sinned against the seventh commandment. In the same way the redeemed purify themselves from the like sin in the uppermost circle, that nearest to the recovered sinlessness of the Earthly Paradise. Sexual aberration is that sin into which noble souls are the most easily betrayed, for it is next-door neighbour to love, the source of all the noblest emotions.[4] The second circle embraces the gluttonous, those who have used the indispensable means of life in excess, or have elevated them, through degenerate refinements, into an end in themselves. Next follow, in both realms, those who have failed to hold the true mean in their use of the riches falling to their share, the Avaricious and Prodigal in one and the same circle. In Hell the circle of the wrathful is the next below, and with them are those 'who bore the sluggish fumes within.' In Purgatory, on the other hand, the slothful are interpolated in the fourth circle from above, before we find the wrathful[5] in the fifth.[6]

II. DIVERGENCIES

From this point, however, the correspondence in the systems of Hell and Purgatory ceases.

In *Hell*, the City of Dis in which the sins arising from Malice of every sort are punished, lies below the circle of

[1] *Inf.* viii. 82. [2] *Inf.* i. 134. [3] *Purg.* ix. 76.
[4] *Purg.* xvii. 103. [5] Cf. the last section of this essay, p. 140.
[6] A tabular presentment of the two systems compared with each

the Wrathful. First we find the Heretics, then follow the Violent, falling into three divisions according to whether this violence was exercised against others, against themselves, or against God and Nature. The eighth circle of Hell contains the Fraudulent in ten 'pits,' and then comes the final circle of the Treacherous, subdivided into four sections.

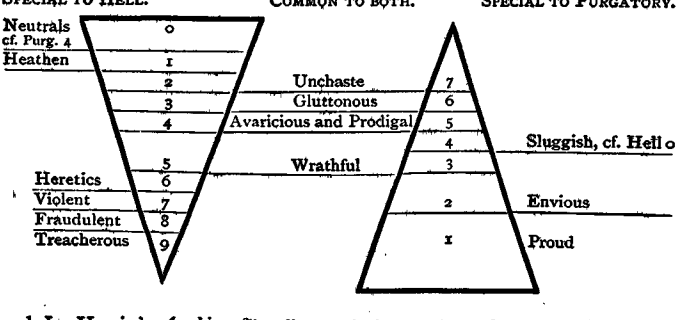
In *Purgatory*, on the other hand, we have only the Envious and the Proud below the circle of the Wrathful.

This comparison further shows us that the seven circles of Purgatory correspond exactly to the seven deadly sins of the Catholic Church, whereas there are no circles in Hell set apart for the punishment of Pride and Envy; and Sloth, whether really omitted or not, at any rate appears to be so.

On the other hand there is no place assigned in Purgatory for all the elaborately classified sins of the four lowest circles of Hell.

Dr. Paur may well express his amazement[1] 'that almost all exponents of the *Divine Comedy*, ancient and modern, seem to have entered upon a conspiracy of unbroken silence

other may facilitate the study of this and the following section.—ED.



[1] In Herrig's *Archiv für die Stud. d. neu. Sprachen*, xxxviii. p. 113 (1865), '*Dante's Sündensystem.*'

with regard to the entirely different systems by which the sins are classified in the eleventh canto of the *Inferno* and the seventeenth of the *Purgatorio*,' and Abegg adds:[1] 'It may be questioned whether there is any real contradiction. If there were, it would provide a fine field for the exercise of the ingentity of Dante scholars. For of course they would declare it was only apparent, all the same, and would proceed to explain it away. They would never be content to accept and acquiesce in it as an oversight of the poet's.'

III. ATTEMPTED EXPLANATIONS

1. *Is any special place in Hell assigned to Pride and Envy?*[2]

Several attempts have been made to overcome the difficulty of there being no division of Hell set apart for the proud or the envious, by proving that there is, after all, a place indirectly assigned to them. By some, Virgil's words to Capaneus, who is suffering for blasphemy,[3] 'O Capaneus, e'en that thy pride remains uncrushed is thy most penalty,' are taken to show that Pride, as well as Blasphemy, is punished in the third belt of the seventh circle of Hell. Some again deduce from Virgil's denunciation of the passionate Filippo Argenti and others his likes,[4] that in the fifth circle not only the wrathful and sluggish but the proud too are punished; and having got so far they gratuitously add the envious. Daniello mentions this theory, but rejects it. Among modern writers, Tommaseo adopted it in 1837, and both Fortunato Lanci[5] and Isid.

[1] See *Jahrbuch der deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft*, i. 204, 205 (1867).

[2] Cf. Postscript, pp. 146, 147.

[3] *Inf.* xiv. 63.

[4] *Inf.* viii. 46, 'In the world he was a man of pride,' and 49, 'How many now on earth bear them as mighty kings who shall be here like hogs in mire, leaving a hideous infamy behind them.' Compare also the instances collected by Selmi from the older Commentators, and given in the notes to the *Chiose Anonime*, published by him, pp. 50, 51.

[5] *De' spiritali tre regni cantati da D. Al.*, Roma, 1855, p. 16.

del Lungo[1] have declared in favour of it. The envious, according to Lanci's particular theory, are those who lie smothered in the slime of the Styx 'bearing the sullen fumes within them,'[2] while Del Lungo identifies them with the 'miry folk' who fall upon Filippo Argenti to 'trounce' him.[3]

Against both these scholars it may be urged that according to them the two sins which appear in Purgatory as the most grievous of all, being expiated at the bottom of the mountain, would in Hell only be mentioned in passing, and without so much as a reference to a single sinner suffering punishment expressly for them. The whole circle (in which pride and envy could only claim a quarter share each) is despatched in eighty-five lines, while in Purgatory not less than five whole cantos are devoted to the Proud and the Envious. And this too though Ciacco[4] and Brunetto Latini[5] name pride and envy in conjunction with greed as the chief sins of Florence, and though Satan's fall is attributed to envy[6] as well as pride.[7]

2. *What Circles of Purgatory correspond to the four last Circles of Hell?*

Still less have the exponents of Dante troubled themselves with the question how it comes that we hear nothing in Purgatory of all the host of sins dealt with in the last twenty-five cantos of the *Inferno*. We find in these cantos eighteen (nay, on a more careful inspection considerably more than twenty) separate classes of sin, with separate punishments attached to them; and only in the case of one of all these classes does there appear to be any reason (and that

[1] In the *Nuova Antologia*, Apr. 1873, No. vi. p. 766.
[2] *Inf.* vii. 123; cf. the last section of this essay, p. 140.
[3] *Inf.* viii. 58.
[4] *Inf.* vi. 74.
[5] *Inf.* xv. 68; cf. xvi. 74.
[6] *Inf.* i. 111, and *Par.* ix. 129.
[7] *Inf.* vii. 12 and *Par.* xxix. 55.

only by a somewhat strained refinement) why there should be no one on the Mountain purging himself of the sin in question. The exception is this. In the thirty-third canto of the *Inferno*,[1] Alberigo de' Manfredi, who is punished in the last division of Hell but one, Ptolemæa, as a traitor to friends receiving his hospitality, tells the poet that the souls of those guilty of this form of treachery fall to the deepest chasm of Hell at the very moment in which the deed is committed, while a devil takes possession of their bodies, and conducts them as though living until the time of their appointed end. This daring fiction then excludes the possibility of such souls complying with the essential condition of access to the Mount of Purgatory by repenting of their sins while still living on earth. It seems but logical then that there should be no place for such in Purgatory.

It might appear that the same argument would hold in the case of suicides, but experience shows that there is often time enough for repentance between the act itself and the end that supervenes.

As for the rest, it is impossible to see why a usurer, a false coiner, a seducer, or a thief should not be admitted to purgation if he had repented of his sin while still alive. In fact there is no lack of direct testimony that he would have been so admitted, though it is a marked characteristic of the souls in Hell that when once there they have no feeling of penitence. Virgil speaks of the soothsaying shoemaker Asdente,[2] 'who would now wish he had kept close to his awl and leather, but rues too late.' If then he had recognised the sinfulness of his fraudulent prophesyings during his lifetime, he would not have fallen to the fourth pit of the eighth circle of Hell, but would have been admitted to purgation. Guido of Montefeltro admits that his deeds were those of the fox, not of the lion, and that he was skilled in every guile and every hidden way

[1] Lines 124-133. [2] *Inf.* xx. 119.

so that his fame had reached the end of earth. Therefore if he died impenitent he must inevitably find a place in one of the pits of the eighth circle. But he goes on to tell how, when growing old, he repented of that which had hitherto been his pride, and did penance humbly for his sins. And he continues,[1] 'Ah, wretched me! and it would have availed me.' His former frauds then would not have excluded him from reaching Purgatory, and ultimately Paradise. It is only because of a later, unrepented, sin that Dante finds him in Hell.

3. *Paur's and Abegg's explanation of the apparent Contradiction.*

Paur's solution of this problem, although not perfectly clear in all points, at any rate goes much deeper and approaches the truth much more nearly than the attempted solutions of the other problem which we recorded a few pages back:

'We might take the non-appearance of the Violent, the Fraudulent, and the Treacherous in Purgatory as intended to sharpen the contrast between crimes springing from "malice" and crimes springing from inclination to what is in itself good (?); but it seems better to suppose that "malicious" crimes are already included under "Pride" and "Envy." To the Christian consciousness the seven deadly sins are the prolific parents of all other possible faults and sins, and, specifically, each of the two deadly sins in question is alternately regarded by the teaching of the Church as the original incentive to all evil.'

As the outcome of his investigation, Paur declares: 'Thus the analogies between the contents of the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* develop all along the line. The apparent discrepancies melt away and every difficulty yields to an attentive examination.' But almost immediately after he himself adds: 'The profoundest of all poetic thinkers has a

[1] *Inf.* xxvii. 84.

right to demand that we should judge his creation not by the gauge of the ordinary rule and square of mechanical thinking, but by granting it the freedom of a living organism and learning to incorporate our own thought with it.' And elsewhere: 'Once for all, the abandonment of the high-roads of logic is an essential part of Dante's method. He loves to break his own way by side-paths, over the rocks and through the underwood.'

Abegg,[1] who adopts Paur's general view, makes the following true and suggestive remark:

'When we think of purification, our minds adopt a different standpoint in judging of the nature, drift, and motive of the sin to be repented and expiated. Thus very different sins may come under one and the same rubric, and again those externally resembling each other may fall under different ones. Here we can and must take into consideration gradations, and so forth, which would not affect our estimate of the unrepented sin, in the mass, when it falls into the hands of implacable justice.'

At the same time Abegg allows himself to be led into uncalled-for concessions as to supposed inconsistencies in the articulation of the ethical systems of Hell and Purgatory. Wegele,[2] with whom he agrees in this instance, says:

'A careful study of the *Purgatory* will soon reveal a marked divergency between the principles and representations which dominate it, and those which preside over the formation of Hell and the distribution of its denizens. External resemblances indeed there are, lovely (?) and ingenious analogies; but still the poet is far more closely circumscribed here than there. His independent personality is compelled to work with much more regard to doctrines and laws sanctioned by the Church and the scholastic philosophy than when he was dealing with Hell; amongst other reasons, because here he plays an active part, while there it was merely passive. Dante's Purgatory is a bodily presentation of the repentance and purification of fallen man;

[1] Abegg, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
[2] *Dante Alighieri's Leben und Werke*, 3rd ed. (1879), p. 501.

and thereanent the Church had laid down definite doctrines, whereas she laid down little else, with respect to Hell, than that the punishments were eternal.'

Abegg adds in this connection :[1]

'When tradition or the doctrine of the Church affords Dante definite material, he uses it. The categories of sin, especially as regards the mortal sins, are determined after Aristotle and the Schoolmen ; but the grouping of the various special sins under one or the other head is frequently peculiar to the poet whenever he has a free hand. And it is here that the influence of his political views may be traced, as when he places treachery below violence, as the worser sin, specifically including treachery against the Empire.'

IV. THE TWO SCHEMES

Virgil and Dante rest directly after they have left the circle of the wrathful in Purgatory ; and it is almost the same in Hell ; only here the conflict at the gate of the city of Dis, and the passage through the circle of Heretics, intervene between the circle of the wrathful and the pause in the journey of the poets. In Purgatory they rest because the fall of night hinders their progress, in Hell they pause, that Dante may accustom himself to the horrible stench that rises from the deeper pit. In either case he prays his guide to fill the time of rest with edifying discourse. In Hell he says,[2] 'Find thee some compensation, that the time pass not, lost, away,' and on the Mount of Purgatory,[3] 'Though our feet are stayed, let thy discourse not stay.' In either case Virgil expounds the divisions under which sins are punished or expunged. The first point that strikes us is that in Purgatory Dante quotes no authority to show the greater culpability of Anger, Envy, and Pride, but rests it entirely on the *sinful per-*

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 240. [2] *Inf.* xi. 13 *sq.*
[3] *Purg.* xvii. 84.

version of love into love of our neighbour's ill; while in Hell he refers twice to Aristotle and once to Genesis. It is not correct to explain this as marking the difference between a Christian and a Heathen analysis, but if such a distinction did exist it would find its justification in the fact that only the baptized can enter the realm of Purgatory, while the whole of heathendom is included in Hell.

V. ARISTOTLE'S THREEFOLD DIVISION OF IMMORAL ACTIONS[1]

The idea that the ethical system of Hell as expounded by Virgil rests upon Aristotle's teaching, though widespread, is erroneous. The well-known passage of the Nicomachean Ethics to which Dante refers,[2] describes morally wrong actions, *τὰ περὶ τὰ ἤθη φευκτά*, as of three kinds, whereas only two main divisions are recognised in Dante's Hell, and the second is subdivided into two, after the precedent of Cicero,[3] as Abegg justly remarks,[4] not of Aristotle.

It is not until after Virgil has developed the whole scheme of punishment inside the city of Dis, without any reference to the Stagirite, that he alludes to the 'Ethics' in reply to Dante's question why the 'sins of incontinence' (punished as a matter of fact in the four upper circles) do not find a place in the nether hell. Then he explains that faults due to *ἀκρασία* [incontinence] are less severely punished than those of malice (*κακία*). But to complete the quotation, Virgil has to include Aristotle's third class of evil-doing, due to 'mad brutishness' (*θηριότης*), which is however foreign to Dante's system.

The Dante Commentators go searching for this unhappy

[1] Cf. Postscript, p. 147.
[2] vii. 1.
[3] *De Officiis*, i. 13 (41).
[4] Abegg, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

'*matta bestialitade*' in almost every corner of Hell, as diligently as for envy and pride, but all in vain. It is true that there are souls who have so fallen under the dominion of their bosom sins, whatever their nature, that they have lost their power of resisting them and lie beneath them like brute beasts with no free will left to them. If we take the Minotaur as the symbol of the murderers and plunderers that immediately follow in the seventh circle, we may regard *Inf.* xii. 33 as ranking them among such bestial souls; also the malicious thieves, according to xxiv. 125, and the sodomites, according to *Purg.* xxvi. 84,[1] would come under the same description. But nowhere is there a separate division of Hell assigned to them, and we could hardly go further astray from Dante's thought than by supposing, with Wegele, that the whole circle of the 'Violent' had 'by their brutishness entirely forfeited those gifts which distinguish men from animals.' This of Pier delle Vigne, and of those 'worthy ones,' Guido Guerra, Tegghiaio and Rusticucci, after whom the poet had so eagerly inquired (*Inf.* vi. 79)!

The only point of referring to Aristotle's Ethics, then, is to unfold the contrast between sins of incontinence and sins of malice, which Cicero does not expound in the passage of the *De Officiis*. The quotations from the *Physics* and from *Genesis* have no bearing on the classification of sins in general, and only serve for a somewhat sophistical proof that usury is a form of violence against God.

VI. DANTE'S FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF PUNISHMENT[2]

Abegg has rightly pointed out that the universal principle guiding both retribution and expiation in the

[1] Cf. p. 203, note 1.

[2] Cf. Postscript, p. 145.

next world is, as we are told in the *Paradiso*,[1] for 'the void made by sin to be filled up, just sufferings making good evil delight.' In Hell this is done to satisfy the demands of justice, in Purgatory as the one means of cleansing the soul from sin. In juridical language, the punishment of the damned is exclusively penal, the penance of the souls seeking purification remedial. But even in the case of penal sentence, when passed on a mortal sinner, the desire to raise his moral condition must always influence the manner in which the sentence is carried out;[2] whereas no such considerations apply to the sinner who goes unrepentant to Hell; and his punishment can only be retributive. The penal codes of earth and hell are however analogous in taking note of deeds only, and not of guilty thoughts which have resulted in no overt acts. On the other hand, when there has been an overt act, the essential significance of the deed itself receives a terrible emphasis from the fact that, in principle at least, the punishments of Dante's Hell consist in the unceasing continuance of the sinful activity itself, now transformed to torment.[3] It is the act then which is punished, not the sinful motives that prompted it. Cain was impelled to fratricide by envy, but it is for fratricide, not for envy, that he is banished to the deepest chasm of Hell.[4] Capaneus sinned from presumption and pride, but his punishment is for blasphemy.[5] It was envy and pride alike that impelled Satan to revolt against his Creator,[6] but the heaviest of all the punishments of Hell is laid on him for treachery against his highest benefactor. Minos, the judge of the damned, looks at the motives prompting the action only as an earthly judge would do, in order to satisfy himself as to the personal responsibility of the sinner for his

[1] vii. 83.
[2] Abegg, p. 208, note 34, and p. 226.
[3] Introduction to my translation of the *Divine Comedy*, p. 12.
[4] *Purg.* xiv. 133.
[5] *Inf.* xiv. 63, 69.
[6] See above, p. 122, notes 6 and 7.

crime, or to discover under which category the crime comes.

When the poet, in his general classification of sin, says :[1] 'Injury is the aim of all malice, that earns hatred in heaven, and every such aim works folk affliction either by force or fraud,' he implies that the sinful desire to break one of the commandments, so long as through lack of courage or opportunity it remains unaccomplished, is not punished *in Hell*;[2] and it is only when by force or fraud the sinner has attained his unlawful goal, or at least done all in his power to attain it, that he receives the punishment.

Now Pride, Envy, and we may add Sluggishness, are sinful *propensities*. They carry with them the seed of the most varied sinful deeds, but we cannot say that to be proud or envious is in itself an action aiming at an unrighteous object, and attaining it by fraud or violence. However unreasonably a man may secretly over-estimate his own powers, however enviously he may look on his neighbour's good fortune, this will not in itself qualify him for a place in Dante's Hell. But if, in order to gain a position held by one worthier than himself, he has slandered him before the authorities, he belongs to the ninth pit of the eighth circle; or if through envy he has devastated the coveted possession of his neighbour, the first belt of the seventh circle claims him.

In Dante's scheme there would be no inhabitants for a circle specially set apart for the proud or the envious.

VII. DANTE'S FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF EXPIATION

The case is very different when we come to the souls on the slopes of the Mount of Purgatory. For the damned,

[1] *Inf.* xi. 22. [2] Abegg, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

Hell has nothing to offer (beyond their own obduracy[1]) except the punishment of physical torment. But in Purgatory, physical pain is only one of many influences brought to bear on the penitent. Some of the penances, as that of the sixth circle, can hardly be regarded as physical pain at all, and everywhere the souls are conscious of being chastened for their own good, so that pain itself is felt as a blessing.[2] And supplementing this there are other aids to holiness in each circle of the mount: here the bas-reliefs carved on the upright wall, there the forms graven on the ground, or the summons sounding through the air, or the involuntary pictures rising in the phantasy, all showing the misery arising from the sin which is to be expiated in that circle, that the souls may turn from it,[3] or pointing to the blessing arising from the virtue neglected, and winning the souls to a love of it.[4] And finally, as the purified soul leaves each circle, it hears a voice reciting the beatitude of which it had before rendered itself unworthy.[5]

The influences brought to bear on the souls in Purgatory then are prevailingly moral and spiritual, the aim is not to inflict on the obdurate sinner the suffering demanded by Justice, but, as the poet himself puts it,[6] to dissipate the last film of scum which dims the conscience, to remove the last shadow left by sinful thoughts or inclinations, so that the soul may once more stand in crystalline transparency, penetrated by the light of God. The penances of Purgatory are designed not merely, or even at all, to expiate evil deeds by suffering, but to overcome the sinful disposition, and restore to the souls the brightness of the purity they had tarnished.

But since it is the disposition which is to be purified, the

[1] *Inf.* xiv. 64.
[2] *Purg.* xix. 77, xxiii. 72, 86.
[3] The 'Bridle,' *Purg.* xiii. 40, or the 'Curb,' xiv. 143.
[4] The 'Lash,' *Purg.* xiii. 39.
[5] *Purg.* xii. 110, xv. 38, xvii. 68, xix. 50, xxii. 4, xxiv. 154, xxvii. 8.
[6] *Purg.* xiii. 88; cf. xvi. 31 and xix. 91.

penances of Purgatory are directed not so much against the overt act as against the impulse whence it arose; and the soul which though never giving way to sinful deeds has admitted sinful desires also needs its purgation.[1]

Pride and Envy lie at the root of many and various sinful deeds.[2] If a man's pride has prevented his acknowledging the equal rights of others, and has led him to overthrow, perhaps murder, his neighbour, then for the purposes of the Mount of Purification it is not enough that he should pay the penalty of violence or of murder, he must purge the sin of pride, root and branch, from his heart. And this can only be done in some circle of the mount specially set apart for the purgation of each separate sinful disposition. The same outward offence then would be punished in Hell as a sinful act, or expiated in Purgatory as a sinful disposition. The solution of our problem thus becomes self-evident; there is no place in Hell for the punishment of the sinful impulses of Pride and Envy, but the evil deeds to which they give rise are punished according to their nature in various circles, while in Purgatory the two lowest (and consequently widest) circles of the mountain are entirely peopled by the shades of those who in penitential anguish are overcoming the sins of Pride and Envy of heart. And on the other hand, in the last three-and-twenty cantos of the *Inferno* we find specific places assigned to the various sinful *acts* rising from these dispositions; but not in the *Purgatorio*, where the dispositions themselves, independently of resultant action, are repented and purged.

VIII. EXAMPLES

The Counts of Santa Fiore are known to have been at feud for a long period with Siena. According to Berlinghieri and Repetti,[3] Count Omberto, a member of this

[1] Matt. v. 28. [2] Cf. Paur, *op. cit.*, pp. 124 *sq.*
[3] Cf. Aquarone, *Dante in Siena*, pp. 109-111.

family, had waylaid and plundered travellers, especially Sienese, on their way through the valleys of Monte Amiata, and had even seized Sienese ambassadors and kept them captive for years. At last the city, to rid herself of the scourge, despatched assassins, who smothered him with pillows in his castle of Campagnatico. If then he had died unrepentant, he would unquestionably have been placed in Phlegethon, the river of boiling blood. But since he repented, the poet places him in the lowest circle of the mount;[1] for the source of his violence was pride, which prevented him from acknowledging the right of the neighbouring free city to her independence.

The Sienese Sapia uttered blasphemy in the passion of her gratified hate,[2] and her place in Hell would therefore have been side by side with Capaneus; but as she acknowledged her sin on her deathbed she does penance in the second circle, among the envious, since it sprang from envy.

Dante says of himself, in the circle of Purgatory in which the envious expiate their sin with their eyelids stitched together with wire,[3] 'Here shall my eyes be one day closed; but not for long, for small is the offence wrought by their envious rolling. My soul hangs in far greater dread of the torment down below [that of the proud], for the burden that must there be borne already presses on me.' He is conscious then, that to purge himself from pride, of which he has been guilty, he will long have to bear the heavy burden of stone upon his shoulders, and will then have to purify himself from the sin of envy, though for a shorter space. Does it follow that he knew he had been guilty of oppression, or calumny through his pride, or of robbery or other crimes springing out of his envy? If he knew that he had committed such crimes, he would surely be guilty of gross hypocrisy in saying of

[1] *Purg.* xi. 58-72. [2] *Purg.* xiii. 122.
[3] *Purg.* xiii. 133.

himself,[1] 'If but my conscience chide not, I am ready for fortune, come how she may.' And again,[2] 'Save that by conscience I am fortified, the good companion who bids man go free under the breastplate of her feeling clean.' And again compare the passage[3] where he indignantly repudiates the accusation of having broken a vessel of the Church in wanton presumption.

In the same way there is nothing to show that Oderisi of Gubbio or Provinzan Salvani fell into any actual deed of sin through the pride they expiate in the first circle, or Guido del Duca and Rinier da Calboli through their envy. In these two circles, then, at any rate, it is the sinful disposition which must be overmastered, in order that the soul may be purified, whether or no it led to sinful acts, and whatever the nature of any such acts may have been.

IX. IN WHAT REGION OF PURGATORY DO THE VIOLENT, THE FRAUDULENT, AND THE TRAITORS, PURGE THEMSELVES IF THEY DIE PENITENT?

This view of Dante's teaching receives further confirmation from another side. It is the unquestionable teaching of the Christian Church, that the worst sinners,—robbers, murderers, the violent, and the fraudulent,—are not cut off from blessedness by their evil deeds if they do but repent and embrace the means of grace held out to them by the mercy of God. But if they have not fully expiated their sin while on earth, Catholic dogma pronounces definitely against their immediate admission to the bliss of heaven. Thus Statius, whom Dante ranks amongst Christians, is condemned to a sojourn of hundreds of years in the fifth circle simply on account of his prodigality.[4] It would therefore be impossible that the gates of Paradise should lie open

[1] *Inf.* xv. 92.
[2] *Inf.* xxviii. 115.
[3] *Inf.* xix. 21.
[4] *Purg.* xxi. 67 and xxii. 34.

without further expiation to the souls of bloodthirsty tyrants, of common panderers or forgers, who only acknowledged the sinfulness of their life shortly before their end. But this further purification can only take place, according to the Catholic doctrine, in Purgatory; nor is there any lack of direct evidence in the poem that the souls of such sinners are actually admitted there.

Take for instance King Manfred, who did not turn to God until after he had received two mortal wounds. 'Horrible were my crimes,'[1] he says; and assuredly they were no mere sins of incontinence. 'Yet,' he continues, 'the infinite goodness hath so wide-open arms, it embraces all that cometh back to it.' Manfred, indeed, having died under the ban of the Church, must long wait before he can be admitted to the purification of Purgatory, but the entrance thereto at last, and thence to the bliss of heaven, is none the less secure.—The case of Jacopo del Cassero is closely analogous.[2]

The later Middle Ages submitted the history of Hugh Capet to strange mythical transformations, but the Chroniclers, whom Dante follows here, are all agreed in charging him with violence against the last of the Karlovingians (whether the imaginary Rudolf, Archbishop of Rheims, or Duke Charles of the Lower Lorraine[3]), whom he excluded from the succession. If he had died in his sins he would therefore have been consigned to the first belt of the seventh circle of Hell, but because he repented Dante places him in Purgatory.

What circle of Purgatory then will serve for the expiation of this and similar crimes? Hugh Capet we find in the circle of the Avaricious,[4] obviously because it was covetousness which tempted the supposed 'butcher's son'

[1] *Purg.* iii. 121. [2] *Purg.* v. 72.
[3] Consult Scartazzini's Commentary on *Purg.* xx.—ED.
[4] *Purg.* xx. 43.

to take possession of the throne of France. Had Manfred already been admitted to purgation we should surely have found him among the proud. In a word, all the acts of sin for which the guilty endure punishment in the manifold subdivisions of Hell are expiated in Purgatory on the terrace determined, not by the manifest deed, but by its motive.

X. SINS OF INCONTINENCE IN PURGATORY

It appears then that Dante did not, as has been suggested, follow the Aristotelian teaching exclusively in the first division of his poem, and make concessions to the Catholic dogma in the second, but that the difference in the classification of sins in the one and the other cantica follows with logical necessity from the difference between punishment and penance. But then the further question forces itself upon us why sins of the flesh, gluttony, greed, and wrathfulness, have not been differently classified in the two cases, instead of following, as they do, the same order in Hell and Purgatory.

Well, we feel at once that sins of incontinence proceed, not from a direct desire of evil, but from an inability to resist the allurements of pleasure or passion. Thus they do not present a sharp contrast between the sinful propensity, and the sin (differing widely from it, and taking outward and independent shape) which it prompts; whereas such a contrast does exist when ill-treatment of 'inferiors' is prompted by pride, or robbery by envy. The sinful propensities of the lustful or the gluttonous lead them direct to the gratification of their passion, those of the avaricious to the retention or increase of their treasures, those of the wrathful to unrestrained manifestation of their rage. Consequently the difference here is only that between desires and their accomplishment, not between the culpable disposition and its essentially different outward manifestations.

The classification will, in these cases, be the same, whether it is the accomplished deed which is to be punished in Hell, or the sinful desire which in itself demands the purification of Purgatory.

XI. PUNISHMENT AND EXPIATION OF COMPLEX SINS

Meanwhile we must not lose sight of the fact that sins of incontinence also may possibly lead to sins essentially unlike themselves, namely the sins of malice; as when carnal desire prompts acts of violence against its object or some third person who stands between the sinner and the accomplishment of his will. In Purgatory it would be inherently possible to expiate successively the primary sin and the secondary one arising out of it, for we have more than one unequivocal example of expiation made in different circles successively.[1] In the particular instance we have selected, however, this affords no solution, for a murder committed in pursuit of carnal desire could not fitly be expiated in any of the circles, from the third to the sixth, destined for sins of incontinence; neither could it find a place in either of the two lower circles, for it could not be attributed either to pride or envy. Consequently it could only be purged in the highest circle, together with the sin lying at the root of it.

In Hell there is not even the abstract possibility of suffering punishment successively for two sins, for the Church teaches that all the punishments of Hell are eternal. Suppose Dante's Minos had consigned to the circle of the carnal, whose punishment is the lightest of all those of Hell, a sinner whose passion had led him to murder, say, the husband of his mistress. There would then be no possibility of his descending to the severer punishment for murder in

[1] *Purg.* xxii. 92.

the circle of the violent, when he had been sufficiently punished for the original sin. The only method open to the poet is to place him at once in the circle assigned to whichever may be the heaviest of all his sins.

A striking confirmation of this view of the punishments of Hell is found in the words that introduce the punishment of the Violent. They run (according to the text adopted in my Berlin edition):[1] 'O blind covetousness, alike in guilt and folly, who dost so spur us in this short life, and then in that eternal one so hideously dost boil us.'

It was primarily covetousness or greed, then, which impelled the tyrants, castellans, and robbers, to devastate life and land; but although greed receives its special punishment in the fourth circle of Hell, we do not find these 'violent' sinners till we reach the circle in which they have to suffer the severer punishment of their specific sins.

This point is yet further strengthened if a slightly different reading of the first line be adopted. The MS. generally known as the *Santa Croce* MS., after the library to which it used once to belong, is regarded in my Berlin edition of the *Comedy* (after Dionisi's precedent) as of very special value. This MS. now reads the line as I have given it ('*O cieca cupidigia, e ria e folle*'). But the words '*e ria*' are written above an erasure, and the original text is now illegible. In the margin stands '*ed ira e folle*,' which, however, has also been crossed out. In the MS. attributed, though erroneously, to Boccaccio (Cod. B of the Berlin edition),[2] the passage reads '*o ira folle*,' and with minor variations the same reading appears in the MS. of Monte Cassino, the old Florentine commentary published by Fanfani, and the lectures delivered by Boccaccio on the

[1] *Inf.* xii. 49.

[2] Owing to a misprint, the reading in question is given in the Berlin edition as found in Cod. D (the MS. belonging to Duke Caetani in Rome), instead of to Cod. B.

Inferno. If in this one instance we might venture to trust Scarabelli's collations (which, however, are very unreliable), then two Trivulzian MSS. (including the extremely good one, which was recovered from the Belgioioso estate), have the same reading; and so has one Ambrosian codex and one in the library of the University of Bologna. Finally Francesco da Buti's Commentary gives it as a variant. —Now if this reading is, as I am inclined to think, the true one, we have a still further conglomeration of sins, for in the line,

'Oh blind covetousness, oh mad anger!'

the poet ascribes the sins punished in the first belt of the seventh circle to wrath as well as greed, though wrath is punished on its own account in the fifth circle.

XII. HERESY

Two sins still call for special examination in consequence of their peculiar character. First, Heresy. It is remarkable that although the Church has at almost all periods been zealous against this sin, it was never made one of the seven deadly sins of the dogmatic canon, and Dante entirely passes it by in Purgatory. In Hell he punishes it in the traditional manner by fire, but assigns it a place that does not fit into the regular system. It follows the four sins of incontinence, but is sharply divided from them by the walls of the city of Dis. The scheme of malicious sins which Virgil expounds to Dante in the eleventh canto only applies to the circles below the sixth (line 16, 'within these crags'), and does not include the heresies which the pilgrims have already left behind; and even Dante's own backward glance towards the sins of the upper circles (lines 70-72) passes over Heresy in silence.—May we not look for the reason of this peculiar attitude in the fact that the poet (who was himself, we have every reason to believe,

once drawn towards Averroistic heresy),[1] knew it was generally the search for truth, however perverted, and not wickedness of will, which led men astray from the accepted doctrine of the Church? But by separating the heretics from the incontinent, and placing them within the walls of the city of Dis, he would give us to understand that the very attempt to seek truth independently of the established doctrine of the Church is in itself a certain undue exaltation of the human intellect.[2]

It may seem yet more surprising that there is no place in Purgatory for the heretics who have returned during their life to the bosom of the Church. Those, indeed, who exalted themselves against her teaching, and despised revelation, must be sought among the proud. But how about those who were led astray while honestly searching for the truth? It would seem that, in marked contrast to the course pursued by the Inquisition, Dante, enlightened perhaps by his own experience, did not demand any special expiation from them if they had repented and submitted once more to the Church; he places them at once completely in line with those who had never swerved in their faith.[3]

XIII. SLUGGISHNESS[4]

The second sin calling for special discussion is 'Sluggishness,' or, as it is called in the usual ecclesiastical terminology, Accidia (*ἀκήδεια*). It is the sin expiated in the fourth circle of Purgatory, and whether or no there is a special place for its punishment in Hell has become a matter of controversy.

We must first ask what is to be understood by the expression? Ecclesiastical writers describe it as indifference to the divine benefits, and especially the means of

[1] See pp. 85 *sq.* of this volume.
[2] *Purg.* xxxiii. 85; *Par.* xxix. 85.
[3] Cf. Notes to my translation of the *Comedy*, *Purg.* xxxi. 58.
[4] Cf. Postscript, pp. 147 *sq.*

grace, and contrast it with consecrated love, Caritas. Dante takes it in a somewhat wider sense. In the seventeenth canto of the *Purgatorio* Virgil says:[1] 'Love is the seed of every virtue in you, and of all doings that earn punishment'; and goes on to explain the desire for ill to our neighbour (Pride, Envy, and Wrath) as love of evil; then he adds that men's love of what is good may also be blameworthy either because of excessive zeal or because of sluggishness, which latter, expiated in the fourth circle, is more particularly characterised in the following lines: 'Every man has some confused conception of good wherein his soul may rest. And this he desires. Wherefore each one strives to gain it. If the love that draws you to its contemplation or acquisition be sluggish, then this terrace, after due repentance, tortures you for it.'—There can be little doubt that where the poet speaks of sluggishness in 'contemplating' he has only mental, if not exclusively spiritual, blessings in mind. But the examples of the counter virtue and the warnings against the vice itself, given two and two in the eighteenth canto, seem to show that when he speaks of sluggishness in 'acquisition' he includes such material blessings as are really to be desired. Both warnings and examples consist of one instance from Scriptural and one from Ethnic history; and the Ethnic example and warning are found in Cæsar's zeal to overcome the Pompeians who were continuing the fight in Spain, and in the inglorious end which awaited those of Æneas' companions who shrank from further toils, and remained behind with Acestes in Sicily. Sluggishness in the acquisition of true honour or in the maintenance of right would therefore be regarded by Dante as 'accidia.'

Now the question is whether the wrathful and the sluggish are punished together in the fifth circle of Hell, as the

[1] Line 103.

avaricious and prodigal are in the fourth. When the poet has described the wrathful tearing one another to pieces in the river Styx,[1] he continues (line 117 *sq.*): 'And likewise I would have thee hold for certain, that underneath the water are folk sighing, and making bubbles on this water's surface, as thine eye tells thee, wheresoe'er it turneth. Fixed in the slime they say,[2] "Gloomy we were in the sweet air that gladdens in the sun, bearing within us sluggish fumes. And now we sadden in the miry blackness."'

Now the last line but one of this passage runs in the Italian, 'Portando dentro *accidioso* fummo,' and this epithet '*accidioso*' (sluggish) led all the older Commentators to infer that those buried in the slime were the sluggish, representing the opposite extreme to wrath, as the avaricious do to the spendthrift. Both issues of my Berlin edition of the Italian text adopt this view in the headings, and it is reproduced in the text and notes of my translation. Finally Scartazzini, by simply quoting Boccaccio's comment on the passage, gives his adherence to this interpretation.

As far as I know, Bernardino Daniello was the first to put a different interpretation on the words '*accidioso fummo*,' which he takes to mean smothered, sullen, wrath. He is followed by Father Pompeo Venturi, Poggiali, and, among the more modern Commentators, by Philalethes, Paur, and Gregorio da Siena.

[1] *Inf.* vii. 110 *sq.*

[2] Dante calls the following four and a half lines a 'hymn' ('this hymn they gurgle in their throats, for they cannot speak it in full utterance'). The old commentator Benvenuto da Imola, as yet unpublished [cf. p. 27, note.—ED.], takes the word '*inno*' literally and makes the following delicious note: 'Observe that a hymn is praise due to God, and is sung in churches. And therefore the author does well to give these creatures a hymn, because the priests, whose business it is to sing, are above measure addicted to the vice of asinine sluggishness, whence the sluggish rogues are often scarcely able to move their lips as they chant the Divine Office, and as they are lazily repeating in an inaudible mutter, "O Lord, open Thou my lips," they settle themselves into a seat.'

Now in the *Convivio*, in the third Canzone, the poet says (verse 5, lines 5-7), 'Virtue . . . is a selecting habit which abides only in the mean,' which is an almost literal transcript from the passage in the Nicomachean Ethics to which Dante is appealing (ii. 2 and ii. 6. 15), and subsequently in the seventeenth chapter of the Commentary he develops the doctrine that each virtue has two inimical neighbours, vices caused the one by excess the other by defect of the quality in question. Thus the two hostile neighbours of the virtue of due liberality are avarice and prodigality; and *à propos* of the expiation of these two sins,[1] Dante lays down the general principle, 'And know that the fault which thrusts its beak in direct opposition to any sin, here dries its sap in company therewith.' It therefore seems obvious enough, and is suggested by the chapter in the *Convivio* above referred to,[2] to place irritability and inertness as the two evil neighbours of gentleness in one and the same circle of Hell for punishment.

Nevertheless I now hold the other view to be the true one. If wrath and sloth were the two contrary vices arising from too great or too little calmness, the intermediary virtue would be the same from whichever side it were approached, and the examples held up to the wrathful should be equally fitted to incite the slothful to improvement. This, however, is not the case. The vision by which the wrathful are admonished shows us the gentleness of the Holy Virgin, when, after long search, she finds the child Jesus in the temple, and that of Pisistratus, when a young man had kissed his daughter in the public street.[3] But the sluggish are reminded of the zeal with which Cæsar marched against Pompey's soldiers, and the haste with which Mary ran to the mountain to seek Elizabeth.[4] It is equally difficult to see how the last named examples

[1] *Purg.* xxii. 49.

[2] 'The seventh is gentleness, which moderates our anger and our excessive patience in the face of our external misfortunes.'

[3] *Purg.* xv. 85 *sq.*

[4] *Purg.* xviii. 100 *sq.*

could have an educative influence on the wrathful, or the former on the sluggish. In the same way the beatitudes recited to the souls on their leaving the two circles are different: for the wrathful it is the seventh,[1] for the slothful the second.[2]

Finally there is one more point to be urged against the punishment of the slothful in Hell, properly so called. As we have attempted to show above, it is not sinful propensities but sinful deeds that are punished in Hell. Now it can hardly be called a *deed* not to rise to active patriotism or to be careless of the acquirement of honour, or even to tire early in the struggle for spiritual knowledge. Spirits who have failed thus do not take their place in Hell, but will be found among 'the craven souls of those who lived without infamy and without praise,'[3] where 'mercy and justice scorn them.' And it is here that Daniello, followed by Philalethes and Paur, places them.

POSTSCRIPT

The preceding essay was completed and ready for the press in April 1877; and at the end of that year my attention was first directed to the collected *Scritti su Dante* of Giuseppe Todeschini of Vicenza, formerly Professor at Padua, published in 1872, three years after the author's death. I got the work originally because I heard that it dealt with the question of Dante's relations with Alessandro of Romena, a subject at that time occupying my own attention, but no sooner did it come into my hands than I found that, besides much else of interest, it opened with an essay entitled *Dell' ordinamento morale dell' Inferno di Dante*, containing many passages that bear on the subject of the preceding paper.

[1] *Purg.* xvii. 68. [2] *Purg.* xix. 50. [3] *Inf.* iii. 35.

The biographical preface by Bartolommeo Bressan gives no account of the dates at which the several works here collected were first written; but it would appear from the dedication to King John of Saxony that this first one was not only written, but printed, by 1859.

My first impulse was to re-write at any rate those parts of the preceding article as to which I had found anything essentially new in Todeschini. But on reflection I feared that were I to do this adequately, my main point, the antithesis of punishment and purgation in the scheme of Providence, might become obscured in the mass of subsidiary material. To such a shifting of the centre of gravity of the essay I could not reconcile myself. Todeschini, however, was well on the way to the apprehension of this distinction, for he entirely grasps the nature of the punishments of Hell, but although he deals with the difference between the systems of Hell and Purgatory he does not enter into the reason of it (Part II. ch. 6).

[*Supplementary note to* § VI.] Todeschini is quite definite in his insistence (see pp. 29, 44, 45, 53, 76, etc.) on the first member of my main thesis, that only sinful deeds are punished in Hell, not the sinful desires which lead to them.[1] Moreover he recognises that pride and envy, being not so much crimes in themselves as the sinful motives which lead to crimes, have *not* a separate place assigned to them in Hell. But he does not explain the reason why each of these sinful dispositions *has* a special circle in Purgatory.

I have given an account, in § III. 1, of the old and new attempts to identify this or that locality in Hell as the place of punishment for Pride and Envy as such, and in

[1] P. 44: 'The poet, having undertaken to range the sinners in his Hell, not according to the culpability of their passions, but with express reference to the nature of their actual sins, did not assign any special place either to envy or to pride, since he considered these vices to be roots of sin rather than actual sins.'

rejecting all these Todeschini (pp. 38-43) again takes the same view as I do, and largely on identical grounds.

A word, however, may be devoted to Count Francesco Maria Torricelli's[1] peculiar theory, which is not without a certain delusive gleam of attraction at first sight. He too discovers in the Stygian swamp the sinners who are suffering for their pride, but he does not agree with the other supporters of this view in mingling them with the wrathful. He relegates them to a second division of the swamp, the place of the wrathful only extending as far as to the tower on the summit of which the poets perceive the signal (*Inf.* viii. 5). It is beyond this tower that they meet the haughty Filippo Argenti,[2] and here are the places destined, as Virgil tells, for those who in their pride deem themselves great kings while on earth.[3] And contiguous to those who sinned from earthly pride, albeit shut off from them by a wall, are the heretics, whose spiritual pride had led them to attempt, with their contracted human reason, to solve problems which it was reserved for the revelation of the Church to answer.

The idea of thus connecting the two kinds of pride is indeed tempting, but in the first place the premise that the Proud are to be found in the fifth circle is more than questionable, and in the second, the theory, ingenious as it is, is conclusively disproved, as Todeschini rightly points out, by the presence of the wall guarded by the demons which

[1] Todeschini rightly says of him, p. 60: 'The Count Torricelli's studies of Dante's sacred poem reveal a powerful intellect and abundant learning, and contain good sensible ideas here and there; and yet for the most part they are a weariness and a weight rather than an assistance to students of the *Divine Comedy*. . . . When the reader has convinced himself that Torricelli's elaborate lucubrations entirely fail to give us any fresh approach to Allighieri's mind on the subject under discussion, he will recognise far more clearly the soundness of the view I have maintained above.'

[2] viii. 46: 'He was a man of pride on earth.'

[3] Line 49: 'How many bear them now, up there, as mighty kings, who shall have their abode here, like hogs in mire.'

divides the fifth circle from the City of Dis in general, and immediately from the sepulchres of the Heretics.

[*To* § v.] Todeschini's view is again identical with my own, inasmuch as we both reject the idea that Dante has assigned a special section of Hell to the punishment of 'Brutishness.'[1] But I must confess that in defence of our common view, which Tommaseo had also defended, my colleague of Vicenza has gone more deeply into the matter, and, especially with reference to Aristotle, has given a more convincing proof than I have done in § v. of the preceding essay. The Stagirite[2] says: 'Brutishness' (as regards the punishment incurred) 'is a less evil than vice, but more terrible, for in it the best part of man (his free will) is not perverted, but non-existent.' He then names, as various kinds of Brutishness, those which arise from bodily injury, from disease, or finally from morbid habits which have grown to be a second nature, and so impede the freedom of the will. But the two first could not, by their nature, be regarded as calling for punishment, and even the third would do so less because of the actual deeds than because of the guilt involved in contracting the habit.[3]

Torricelli's view, that the proud and the heretics are to be taken together as the 'brutish' in Dante's Hell, is entirely unsupported, and cannot be saved or excused by its unquestionable ingenuity. According to this theory, such as Farinata degli Uberti and Frederick II. of Hohenstaufen[4] would be classed by the poet as brutish.

[1] P. 59: 'If we run through the list of sins that are actually punished in these circles (vii.–ix.), we find that they include those misdeeds which according to Aristotle's teaching . . . are ascribed to brutishness.'

[2] *Ethics*, vii. 6. 7.

[3] The parenthetical explanations of Aristotle's words (for which Witte, not Todeschini, is responsible) are not justified. There is no reference to punishment in the passage, and *reason*, rather than *free will*, is intended by the 'highest in man.' Also see Appendix.—ED.

[4] *Inf.* xiii. 75: 'Who was so worthy of honour'; *Convivio* iv. 10: 58. 'By the report which proclaims him, he was a great logician and clerk.'

[*To* § XIII.] Owing to considerations which I have urged more than once already, I have arrived at the conclusion that the spirits in the seventh circle of Hell, below the surface of the Stygian swamp, are not to be regarded as the sluggish, at the opposite extreme to the wrathful, but as the sullen, a subdivision of the wrathful themselves. And now, in his article *Ueber die Congruenz der Strafen und Sünden*,[1] Scartazzini, who took the opposite view in his notes on the *Inferno*, upholds the true interpretation, first propounded by Daniello. Todeschini also concurs in this view[2] and mentions Pier Alessandro Paravia, whose short essay on this subject was also unknown to me, as supporting the same opinion. We agree further in maintaining that the true place for the sluggish is in the ante-hell.

Todeschini[3] interprets this ante-hell, which, according to our view, would correspond to the fourth circle of Purgatory, in a special way of his own. The souls here are not punished for any sinful deeds, but for a negative attitude which amounts to a denial of Charity, of that Love which ranks among the theological virtues. Love of our neighbour is expressed in good works, and he who has neglected them during life is consigned to ante-hell after death.

In the same way those who fail in love of God belong here. And among these are not merely the souls of men, but those angels who, although they did not join in Satan's revolt, held aloof from the struggle, and in that they were 'not faithful, but neutral,' are now herded with the sluggish human souls in this ante-hell.

But while acknowledging the ingenuity of this suggestion I cannot bring myself to accept it as tenable. On the one hand all sins arise from insufficient or misdirected love,

[1] *Dante Jahrbuch*, iv. 288-290.
[2] Pp. 30-33.
[3] Pp. 80-88.

and this principle is not only enunciated in the *Epistle to the Romans*, xiii. 9, but is elaborated by Dante himself in the ethical scheme of the seventeenth canto of the *Purgatorio*. In this extended sense of the word 'love' its negation includes far more than mere sluggishness. But if we follow what appears to be Todeschini's lead, and understand charity (at any rate apart from the case of the neutral angels) as confined to that love which busies itself in good works, it then covers too narrow a field. For it was cowardice (*viltà*), not a lack of this charity, which threw Celestine v. into the ante-hell,[1] for not daring to fill the position intrusted to him, the highest office in the Church, during the time of storm and stress. Nor was it a deed of charity when Cæsar hastened to Spain to reduce Ilerda,[2] nor a breach of charity when some of the companions of Æneas, weary of their long wanderings, chose to remain behind in Sicily when the rest took ship to Italy.[3] It is feebleness of heart, lack of endurance, which the poet understands by sluggishness (*accidia*) in the verses quoted above (p. 141); somewhat extending, as we said, the ecclesiastical conception.

But Todeschini's interpretation of the sin punished in the ante-hell does not stand alone. It is an integral part of the whole economy of Hell and of its sinful inhabitants as conceived by him, and has a special bearing on his idea of the Limbo and of the sixth circle of Hell. As Todeschini[4] lays special stress on this supposed discovery, it seems proper to give a short account of it.

The sins punished in Hell, he says, are of three, not two, kinds. Circles 2 to 5 contain those who have sinned from Incontinence, circles 7 to 9 those who have sinned from Malice, leaving the ante-hell, and the first and the sixth circles, for those who have sinned against the

[1] *Inf.* iii. 60.
[2] *Purg.* xviii. 101.
[3] *Purg.* xviii. 136.
[4] P. 73.

theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity. We have already seen how Todeschini regards sluggishness as the negation of love, and consigns it for punishment to the ante-hell. He does not however admit of the possibility of sinning against hope as such. He who believes may lack love, and he who loves may lack faith, but he who has love and faith cannot but have hope.

To this it may be answered that as Faith without works of Love can indeed be conceived, but only as a body without a soul,[1] only as a dead faith (barren orthodoxy), so Faith and Love may be conceived of without Hope—witness the suicides—though only on the supposition that these two virtues have not penetrated to the vital centre of him who lacks Hope. So if there were reason for assigning a special place to those who have Faith but lack Love, there would be as good a reason for assigning one to those who wax desperate through lack of Hope. At any rate, therefore, Todeschini's division of Hell is itself open to the charge of inconsequence.

[*To* § XII.] On the other hand, Todeschini's remarks on lack of Faith[2] have a certain consistency to recommend them. Before coming to those who sinned from incontinence, we have those who, through no fault of their own, lacked faith only because they lacked knowledge, and are on that account cut off from bliss; the innocent infants who died before baptism, and the virtuous Heathens or Mohammedans, occupying the first circle, or *Limbo*. In the same way, continues Todeschini, the sixth circle, the first region of 'malicious' sinners, contains those to whom the true faith was proclaimed but who rejected or perverted it. But, he concludes, the fiery graves of this circle only contain those heretics whose error remained, so to speak, theoretical. Those heretical teachers who caused

[1] *Epistle of James* ii. 20, 26; 1 *Corinthians* xiii. 2.
[2] Pp. 88-92, 95-97.

actual schism are banished to the ninth pit of the eighth circle.

As regards the last named sectaries, the poet consigns them to this pit, not because they held and propagated false beliefs, but because, in some form or other, they have sown discord where harmony should reign; and we find Mohammed and Ali side by side with those who have stirred up father and son, allies or fellow-citizens, the one against the other. We must not therefore range the sinners punished in this ninth pit of the eighth circle amongst the sects of heretics, as such.

As regards those in the fiery sepulchres of the sixth circle, I imagine that Todeschini is more Catholic than Dante himself. According to the doctrine of the Church, unbelief and misbelief were indeed in a certain sense the field-marshals of malicious sins, but only in so far as they could be regarded as *hæretica pravitas*, not in so far as they were the mere wanderings of the intellect honestly seeking for light. Now we know from more than one passage in the poem that Dante passed no mild judgment on heresy, but sternly rebuked those who promulgated error through pride or the love of innovation.[1] But it cannot be without reason that he interposes the great precipice between the sixth circle and the properly 'malicious' sinners, and passes the heretics in complete silence in the enumeration of the sins of Malice put into Virgil's mouth. In the same spirit, the punishment of the heretics is graduated according to the degree of their guilt,[2] and it seems that religious doubt in itself, nay, even positively erroneous opinions, may in some cases not merit punishment at all.[3]

Finally, as regards the souls in Limbo. It is through no

[1] *Par.* xii. 100, xiii. 124-129.

[2] *Inf.* ix. 131: 'The tombs are more and less heated.'

[3] *Par.* iv. 67: 'For our justice to appear unjust in the eyes of mortals is argument of Faith, not of heretical depravity.'

fault of their own that they were unbaptized and without faith, and that they long in vain for the bliss of the Christian heaven, although they suffer no punishment; and therefore I cannot bring myself to include them in any shape or form in the classification of the sinners who have, by their own guilt, subjected themselves to infernal punishment.

VI.—THE TOPOGRAPHY OF FLORENCE ABOUT THE YEAR 1300

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 1-21 (1879).]

I. PRELIMINARY

THE student of the *Divine Comedy* soon feels the need of some mental presentation of the regions in which the lofty drama is enacted, and primarily of the three spiritual realms, the cosmic stage, if we may use such an expression of the drama. Accordingly attempts displaying considerable skill have been made, from the first half of the sixteenth century onwards, to give pictorial representations of Dante's Hell, and subsequently, though less successfully, of his Purgatory and Paradise.

But although the poet's journey took him through the kingdoms of the departed, yet he looks back continually to the world of the living, and it is indispensable, for the comprehension of numerous passages of the poem, to know our way about this Earth, as it was or was supposed to be in Dante's time. And here we must express our regret that so little has as yet been done to give a clear idea of the whole surface of the Earth as Dante conceived it. For the geography of Italy in particular more has been accomplished. In 1843 I contributed a first imperfect attempt at a Dante map of Italy, to the fourth edition of Kannegiesser's translation of the *Comedy*. In a less imperfect form it accompanied the last (5th) edition, while in the interval two Italian scholars, Carbone (in Lord Vernon's *Inferno*, vol. ii. pp. 155 *sq.*, 1862) and Covino (in 1865), had followed my example.

II. THE PLAN IN PHILALETHES' TRANSLATION OF THE DIVINA COMMEDIA

After the realms of the departed, the general conformation of the Earth's surface, and the special geography of Italy, we come to the Topography of Florence, the most highly specialised branch of all. The poet not unfrequently refers to localities in Florence, both in the *Comedy* and elsewhere; but so far as I am aware, no attempt was made to meet the want thus created till 1849, when Philalethes inserted a map of Florence in the third volume of his translation. It is simply a portion of a large-scale plan of modern Florence (larger even than Fantozzi's *Pianta Geometrica*). It extends in every direction considerably beyond Arnolfo di Lapo's walls (marked in red), which were built during Dante's lifetime. But even within them it by no means gives a true picture of the town as it stood in the year 1300. A reference to a few of the best-known localities will suffice. The Duomo appears just in its present form, although the foundation-stone of the building, which was to replace not only the ancient Church of Santa Reparata, but also the Hospital of St. John, was not laid till 1298, and it was reserved for Filippo Brunelleschi, towards the middle of the fifteenth century, to complete, or nearly complete, the work according to a plan fundamentally differing from Arn. di Lapo's original design. The omission of Giotto's renowned Campanile, which, it is generally supposed, was begun in 1334, would be unimpeachable if consistency had been observed in such matters throughout.—But even the Church of Or San Michele is given exactly in its present form, although in Dante's time, to wit in 1284, the old church ceased to exist; a corn exchange was erected on the same site, and it was not till 1336 that Orcagna, as we call him, transformed it into the present church, the work being finished about

1355.—Again, we find the Palazzo Vecchio covering the same area as at present, whereas the site was not purchased till 1298, and the building, as it now stands, was only completed under Walter of Brienne in 1342.—Close beside it we see the Reali Ufizi (only that it is misspelt *Uffizzi*) in the full dimensions now familiar to all lovers of the art treasures of Florence, though the building was not raised till the seventh decade of the sixteenth century.—But perhaps the most startling phenomenon is the appearance, in a plan of Florence designed to illustrate the *Divine Comedy*, of the Bazaar of the Corso degli Adimari, which was built in 1834.[1]

Special care has been given to the indication of the houses of illustrious Florentine families, of which no fewer than eighty-two are marked. But by far the greater number of these are neither mentioned nor even referred to in the *Divine Comedy*, and therefore have no special interest for the readers of the poem. It is all the more surprising to find that several of the names expressly mentioned in the fifteenth and sixteenth cantos of the *Paradiso*, as the Barucci, the Calfucci, the Giudi, the Nerli, and the Del Vecchio are omitted; and the house in which Beatrice was born should surely have been marked, though the name of the Portinari, it is true, does not appear in the *Divine Comedy*. There is documentary evidence that the initial of the Fifanti is F, not S, and the family of Gangalandi was not spelt Gagalandi.

III. HOUSE OF THE ALLIGHIERI

Whether the localities of all these houses are correctly assigned is a delicate question, and on this point I hesitate

[1] The map therefore only merits the name of 'Map of Mediæval Florence,' given to it by Hartwig (*Quellen und Forschungen der ältesten Geschichte der Stadt Florenz*, Marburg, 1875, p. 78), in so far as it marks the three traditional circumvallations and the site of a number of dwellings.

to pronounce a judgment, especially as the results seldom coincide with Giunio Carbone's map. I cannot however repress a comment on one point—the point, in fact, of paramount interest for the Dante student. The map gives the houses of the Allighieri as situated at the left-hand corner just after you pass the Mercato Vecchio as you go along the Corso (which, however, is called the Via de' Speziali till past this point) from West to East. Now it is certain, from *Par.* xvi. 40-42, that Dante's ancestors, the Elisei, lived either in this house or (as given in my plan) in the opposite corner house on the right. But Leonardo Bruni Aretino, who is a perfectly trustworthy witness, says most distinctly that the Allighieri branch dwelt on the Piazza San Martino, adding that he pointed out the house to a great-grandson of the poet who came to see him when on a visit to Florence from Verona.[1] This statement is completely borne out by the mention of the 'Alaghieris' in documents going back to the end of the twelfth century, as belonging to the parish of San Martino.[2] Assuming that our maps give the houses of the Donati, Giuochi, and Sacchetti correctly, Aretino's detailed data lead to the further conclusion that the house of the Allighieri must have stood next to the Donati's

[1] 'Messer Cacciaguida and his brothers and their forebears lived just in the district of Porta San Piero, where it is first entered from the Mercato Vecchio, in the houses still called of the Elisei, for the family possession remained with them. The descendants of Messer Cacciaguida called the Aldighieri dwelt at the piazza behind San Martino del Vescovo, against the street that runs to the house of the Sacchetti, and in the other direction stretches to the houses of the Donati and Giuochi. . . . He had a very good house in Florence, next to that of Geri di Messer Bello, his consort. . . . And it is not long since this Lionardo [Allighieri] came to Florence with other young men of Verona, well appointed and in good style; and he paid me a visit as a friend of the memory of his great-grandfather, Dante. And I showed him Dante's house, and that of his forebears, and I pointed out to him many particulars with which he was not acquainted, because he and his family had been estranged from their fatherland.'

[2] Gargani, *Della casa di Dante* (Firenze, 1865), pp. 29-38.

garden in the Via Santa Margherita, the narrow alley leading northwards from the Piazza San Martino to the Corso. Just opposite stands the little Church of Santa Margherita.[1] Tradition, however, places the house elsewhere, though in the immediate neighbourhood, in the Via Ricciarda just opposite the Piazza San Martino; and this latter house, adorned with two antique doors, has lately been officially designated as the house in which the poet first saw the light.[2]

The range and thoroughness of the late revered Prince's scholarship leave no room to doubt that the deficiencies noticed, in what is after all only a matter of subsidiary importance, are due to some other hand than his, from which he must have received the plan appended to his admirable translation. I conjecture that some work, presumably Italian, on this unquestionably interesting subject, lay to hand, and was reproduced as a useful appendix without further investigation.

IV. GIUNIO CARBONE'S PLAN

The task which Giunio Carbone has executed at the cost of such immense labour for the second volume of Lord Vernon's great work on Dante merits the warmest recognition. He has made his plan on the scale of Fantozzi's excellent map of modern Florence, and has taken the system of the streets from it; but has been at the greatest pains to mark those buildings only which were standing in Dante's time, and in the form in which they then stood. Though the erection of the wall usually known as the fourth was taken in hand under Arnolfo di Lapo's direction about the year 1300, it was not finished till a full generation later. Carbone's chart, therefore, is confined to the city as embraced by the walls built under

[1] Cf. the very clear fragmentary plan given in the work above referred to, p. 42. (Gargani.)

[2] In this uncertainty we have marked both buildings with the letter (*a*) in our plan.

Henry IV. in the year 1078, according to Villani. When we add that, with the exception of the four bridges over the Arno, there is not a single name printed on the chart, it will be realised that, however well the student may be acquainted with modern Florence, he will not be able to find his way on the map without difficulty. But the absence of names in the plan itself is amply compensated for by an enormous number of references. To begin with, the buildings given are divided into 170 local sections to facilitate the finding of the separate buildings. Then, under the head of gates, streets, piazzas, churches and other ecclesiastical buildings, houses, towers, and halls, the material is given in full, with a regular system of differentiated signs and references. Then follow notes and explanations occupying eighty-two of the great folio pages of the work. If, for example, we look up the mansion of the Sanella in the list of houses, we find the reference 'S. 63, c. 55.' This means that to find it on the map we must begin by searching out section 63, which we find bordering the Mercato Vecchio on the north. It happens to be one of the smallest sections, and contains only three numbers, two of which have a c. (*casa*) attached to show that they indicate the sites of houses, and the one marked c. 55, facing the Mercato, is the Sanella's. Of such references there are 18 to gates, 289 to streets, 80 to piazzas, 82 to ecclesiastical buildings, 221 to houses, 121 to towers, and 34 to halls. But the actual number of houses registered is considerably greater, inasmuch as the same number serves to indicate several houses if they belong to the same family. Thus the total number of sites indicated amounts to considerably above a thousand.

It was only possible to find room for so many references in the very limited space by the use of extremely small, almost microscopic, type, and the difficulty of deciphering them is further increased by the double-hatched ground on which many of the numbers are printed.

Although fully realising the value of this wealth of detail to the student of early Florentine history in general, the reader of Dante will not unnaturally ask himself what the use of this bewildering and superfluous number of scarcely decipherable figures is to him, since hardly more than a tenth of the localities indicated are mentioned in the *Comedy*, or required in studying it. The oftener he encounters the labour of finding the house of some particular family on the plan, the more he will feel that for his purposes a much scantier supply of information would have been considerably more valuable.

It also seems a defect, that only the limits of the city as defined by the walls of the eleventh century are given. Surely the celebrated passage in the *Paradiso*, xv. 97, would alone be enough to suggest the desirability of pointing out the older, and considerably narrower limits. In the same connection we note that the ancient city gates are not indicated either, though this leaves unexplained the circumstance that streets which, in the map, lie within the city (such as the Borgo S. Piero, or the Borgo de' Greci), are indicated by their names as belonging to suburbs (Borghi).

I do not feel qualified to judge of the correctness of the identifications in detail. There is, however, one point to which I must take exception. I cannot accept Carbone's localisation of the Porta San Piero at the eastern end of the Via delle Badesse, near the Church of S. Niccolò del Ceppo, but place it, as early writers do, at the end of the extension of the Corso beginning at the ancient Porta S. Piero; that is to say at the end of the Borgo degli Albizi, near the Church of San Piero Maggiore.

V. THE ACCOMPANYING PLAN

The plan that is herewith presented to the reader is based in all important particulars on that of Carbone, with which it conforms in extent and in scale, except that

the newer portion of the city, on the left bank of the Arno, has been entirely omitted.' Although Perrens, in his *Histoire de Florence* (1877), has reproduced (in a very meagre form) the work of the Italian scholar, I felt that I had no right, without the author's permission, to adopt it myself. Signor Carbone has however with extreme readiness allowed me this privilege.

VI. THE 'EARLIEST WALLS' OF TRADITION, AND THEIR OVERTHROW BY TOTILA

It will be clear however from what has been said above, that a few minor alterations have been found necessary. The most important arise from my desire clearly to portray the earlier Florence of which Cacciaguida speaks. With this object I have lined the whole mass of buildings of the inner city, instead of marking the course of the earlier walls in colour, as is done in many maps of the city, including that which accompanies Philalethes' translation. I have also marked the sites of the four principal gates of the earlier city. Note that *two* inner wall-circles are usually given in the maps, the first being the Roman wall, the second that built by Charlemagne after the destruction of the city by Attila or Totila. But our only authority for the area of this earliest city is the twenty-seventh chapter of the *Istorie* of the supposed Ricordano Malespini,[1] with which even Carbone[2] begins his topography. Since Scheffer Boichorst,[3] however, has shown the *Istorie* to be a later forgery, we have no grounds left for accepting the existence of any such inner wall; nor have we any reliable evidence that Charlemagne enlarged the boundaries of the city beyond its ancient limits.

[1] For want of a newer edition, I quote from that of Tommaso Buonaventuri, which appeared in quarto in Florence (1718); Tartini and Franchi.

[2] Pp. 271, 272.

[3] *Florentiner Studien* (Leipzig, 1874), i.

Contemporary historians know absolutely nothing[1] of the story of the destruction of the city by Totila or one of his generals (sometimes confused with Attila, and the latter's title of 'Scourge of God' erroneously appropriated to him), though all the Florentine chroniclers repeat the fable. One and all connect it with the supposed rebuilding of the city; their accounts however differ considerably.

The *Chronica de Origine civitatis* which Hartwig[2] dates in the first decades of the thirteenth century, after telling of Totila's hostility towards the Romans, and their favoured Florence, records the death of the king 'in Maritima' (not far from Rimini), and then continues:[3] 'But the Romans began to ponder how Florence might be rebuilt, that she might continue to withstand the men of Fiesole,' on which follows the account of the rebuilding of the city.

Giovanni Villani,[4] on the other hand, places the event some centuries later, and attributes the rebuilding of the city to Charlemagne. Otherwise his description of the conformation of the restored city and of the part played by the Romans is essentially the same as that of the *Chronica*. But neither Villani nor the ancient chronicler gives us any reason to imagine, as the supposed Malespini[5] would have us believe, that the walls of the restored city embraced a larger area than the original ones. The words of the *Chronica* are: 'they surrounded it with walls of modest compass (*modico circuitu*),' and in the *Libro Fiesolàno*[6] that was founded upon it, and composed at the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century, we read that the walls were built up stronger than before, but nothing is said of increasing their circuit. Villani,[7] whose

[1] Hartwig, *op. cit.*, pp. 81, 82. Cf. Vinc. Borghini, *Discorsi.*, Fir. 1585, 4, ii. 251. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. xix. [3] P. 59.

[4] *Cronica*, iii. 2. In the edition of 1823 (Florence, Magheri), of which Ign. Moutier was the principal editor. See pp. 62 *sq.* of the translation by R. Selfe. London, 1896.

[5] Cap. 39. [6] Hartwig, *op. cit.*, p. xliii. [7] *Op. cit.*, iii. 1.

principal source for the early times is the *Chronica*, gives it as his view that the area was contracted. 'Thus,' he says, 'did they begin to rebuild Florence, not however of the size that it had been at the first, but of lesser extent (*di minore sito*), to the end it might more speedily be walled and fortified, and might be a defence like a rampart (*battifolle*), against the city of Fiesole.'[1]

After describing, in the next chapter, how the new Florence was built on a small space of ground, and of narrow compass, after the model of Rome on a smaller scale, he gives the following description.

VII. GIOV. VILLANI'S DESCRIPTION OF THE ANCIENT WALLS OF FLORENCE

'The rebuilding of the new city of Florence . . . began on the side of the sunrise at the [ancient] gate of S. Piero, which was where were after the houses of M. Bellincione Berti of the Rovignani, a noble and powerful citizen, albeit to-day they have disappeared, the which houses by inheritance of the Countess Gualdrada, his daughter, and wife to the first Count Guido, passed to the Counts Guidi, her descendants, when they became citizens of Florence, and afterwards they sold them to the black Cerchi,[2] a Florentine family; and from the said gate ran a borgo as far as S. Piero Maggiore after the fashion of Rome, and from that gate the walls proceeded as far as the Duomo, on the site where now runs the great road [de' Balestrieri[3]] to San Giovanni (*the Baptistery*) as far as the Bishop's Palace. And here was another gate which was called the gate of the Duomo, but there were who called it the Bishop's Gate; and without this gate was built the Church of S. Lorenzo, just as in Rome there is San Lorenzo with-

[1] Cf. also Boccaccio's *Life of Dante*, Milanesi's edition, p. 6.
[2] Cf. here Scheffer Boichorst, *op. cit.*, pp. 26 *sq.*
[3] Not Palestrieri as given in the plan in Philalethes.

out the walls; and within that gate is S. Giovanni, like as in Rome S. Giovanni Laterano.

'And then proceeding [following the walls westward], as at Rome, in that part they made Santa Maria Maggiore; and then from S. Michele Berteldi [Piazza degli Antinori] as far as the third gate of S. Pancrazio,[1] where are now the houses of the Tornaquinci, and S. Pancrazio was without the city and near S. Paolo, just as in Rome, on the other side of the city, over against S. Piero, as at Rome. And then from the said gate of S. Pancrazio, they followed on where now is the Church of Santa Trinità, which was without the walls; and hard by was a postern gate called the Porta Rossa, and down to our own times the road has retained the name. And afterward the walls turned where are now the houses of the Scali along the Via di Terma as far as the gate of Santa Maria, some way past the Mercato Nuovo, and that was the fourth principal gate, which was flanked on one side by the houses now of the Infangati [on the southern portion of the eastern side of the Mercato Nuovo]; and above the said gate was the Church of Santa Maria, called Sopra Porta; and afterwards when the said gate was pulled down, the city having increased, the said church was transported to where it now is. And the Borgo di Santo Apostolo was without the city, and also S. Stefano after the fashion of Rome (?), and beyond S. Stefano, at the end of the master street of Porta Santa Maria, they made and built a bridge founded on piles of stone in the Arno, which afterwards was called the Ponte Vecchio, and it exists to this day; and was much more narrow than it now is, and was the first bridge which was made in Florence. And from S. Mary's Gate the walls went on as far as the Turret of Altafonte,[2] which was at

[1] Villani always writes 'Brancazio,' and traces the origin of the arms borne by the quarter called after this gate, *i.e.* a lion's claws, to the 'branca.'

[2] 'Malespini' writes it, chap. 44, Altrafonte, perhaps for Altafronte (?). [So printed (Altafronte) in the Bologna edition of 1867, p. 66.—ED.]

the extremity of a projection of the city, running out to the river Arno, then running on behind the Church of S. Piero Scheraggio, which was so called from a ditch or conduit called the Scheraggio, which received almost all the rain-water of the city that flowed into the Arno. And behind the Church of S. Piero Scheraggio was a postern gate, which was called the Peruzza Gate, and from there the walls went on by the great street [the present Piazza S. Firenze] as far as the Via del Garbo [now Via Condotta, a continuation of Via del Garbo], where was another postern, and then behind the Badia of Florence [through the present Via del Proconsolo] the walls returned to Porta S. Piero.

'And within so small a space the new Florence was rebuilt with good walls and frequent towers with four master gates, to wit, the Porta San Piero, the Porta del Duomo, the Porta San Pancrazio, and the Porta Santa Maria, the which were in the form of a cross; and in the midst of the city were S. Andrea, after the fashion of Rome [S. Andrea della Valle is more modern?], and Santa Maria in Campidoglio, and what now is the Mercato Vecchio was the Mercato di Campidoglio [the Forum at the foot of the Capitol] after the fashion of Rome. And the city was divided into quarters, according to the said four gates,[1] but afterwards, when the city increased, it was divided into six sestos, as being a perfect number, for the sesto of Oltrarno was added thereto, as soon as it was inhabited, and when the Porta di Santa Maria was pulled down, the name was dropped, and it was divided by the course of the main street [Por Santa Maria] and on one side was made the sesto of San Piero Scheraggio, and on the other side that of the Borgo [Santi Apostoli]; and the three first gates [and the quarters named after them] continued to give their name to sestos, as they have done even to our own times.'

[1] First quarter, San Piero, and so on in the order in which the gates are here given.

VIII. FLORENTIA QUADRATA

As regards the limits of the city to the East, North, and West, the accompanying plan follows Villani's description with all possible exactitude. A glance at it will suffice to show not only that the walls, with slight divergences, form a rectangle looking to the four points of the compass, but that the main streets of the inner city ran, with considerable exactitude, from East to West, and from North to South.

Dr. Hartwig,[1] to whose kindly assistance I am indebted for much valuable help in constructing my map, has done a great service in pointing out that in the conformation of the inner city we can trace the model of a Roman colonia. Now, apart from the legendary accounts current in the Middle Ages of Cæsar's besieging Catiline in Fiesole, there can be no doubt that Florence had been a Roman military colony since the time of Augustus, if not of Cæsar. Thus we can trace the Cardo, running North and South, under the name of the Calimara, connecting the gate by the Cathedral with the Por Santa Maria, and passing along the east side of the Mercato Nuovo. Then from East to West is the Decumanus Major, called successively the Corso, the Via de' Speziali, and the Via degli Strozzi. Parallel with the Cardo, and following the direction of the old walls, run the Via del Proconsolo and Via de' Balestrieri on the East, and the Via Tornabuoni and the Piazza Antinori on the West. Parallel to the Corso we find the Piazza del Duomo and its western continuation, the Via de' Cerretani. The two main streets themselves intersect in the centre of the city, at the South-east corner of the Mercato Vecchio, also called the Forum Regis, which must have been the forum of the Colonia. Here the colonists erected their little Capitol, in imitation of that in Rome, as in Cologne and other colonies; and the name is preserved by the Church

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 77-79.

of Santa Maria del Campidoglio. Here too we may suppose the Duumvirs held their tribunal, and the Longobard Counts pronounced judgment.

It is not so easy to trace the wall on the fourth or southern side of the city. The present Via de' Gondi, and its continuation after the Piazza de' Signori in the Vaccherecia, running from opposite the Church of San Firenze at the south-east corner of the rectangle, does indeed take the direction we want towards the south-west corner, but just below the Por Santa Maria it is broken off by a perfect labyrinth of houses. Villani says the walls followed the line of the present Via della Terma, the middle road of the three running East from the Piazza Santa Trinità; but this street is both narrow and winding, besides which it does not run due East and West, but diverges considerably to the South. Villani's statements regarding the portion of the walls lying between the Porta Santa Maria and the present Piazza S. Firenze seem still more suspicious. First, he says, they ran to the Castle of Altafonte on the Arno, which, though the site is not exactly known, must have lain to the South-east. Thence they came behind San Pier Scheraggio to S. Firenze, *i.e.* in a north-easterly direction. Following this account the southern boundary of the city, unlike those of the three other sides, is an extraordinary confusion of crooked lines and obtuse and acute angles. The plan in Philalethes would make this even clearer than it does if the line of wall were drawn, as it should be, through the Via della Terma, instead of the Borgo Santi Apostoli. It is also noteworthy that except Villani and the supposed Malespini, no writer mentions this Castle of Altafonte, nor, so far as I am aware, are there any remains to testify to its existence. And if, as Villani himself tells us, Florence was rebuilt to serve as a rampart against Fiesole, it appears strange that the fortress should be built on the side of the city away from Fiesole.

The statement of the Latin chronicler that there was 'an ancient tower near the "Episcopatus,"' that is on the Fiesole side, sounds far more probable. These considerations, coupled with the possibility that the southern side of the city may have been considerably altered by the frequent and disastrous inundations of former centuries, have led me to fill in the line of wall *conjecturally* between S. Trinità and Porta Santa Maria so as to complete the rectangle.[1] It must be admitted that a glance at the plan suggests the alternative of taking the Via di Porta Rossa, with its continuations the Baccano and the Via Condotta, for the southern boundary lines of the old city. This would give complete regularity; but then the Mercato Nuovo would be left outside the walls, which does not appear probable, unless indeed we are to regard it as the market in which the fishermen of the Borgo Santi Apostoli sold the fruits of their toil to the inhabitants of the city.[1]

IX. THE ELEVENTH-CENTURY WALLS

As regards that further portion of the city which was walled in in the eleventh century, my plan follows Carbone in all essentials; but, as already mentioned, I locate the outer Porta San Piero otherwise. I have also marked (but only in dotted lines) three important localities which lie close outside this *second* wall, as we must call it (not *third* as is customary), namely, the Piazza of Santa Maria Novella, the Church and Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, and the Piazza of Santa Croce, with a view to helping readers who are acquainted with modern Florence to orient themselves. Inside the walls, the oval of the Roman amphitheatre (the Parlagio), in which the houses of the Peruzzi nestled, is indicated in the same way, and I have further marked the site of the column of Mars, to which Dante

[1] See Appendix.—Ed.

repeatedly refers. Finally, it seemed desirable to note the place where the problematic Castle of Altafonte must have stood if it ever existed.[1]

In indicating localities I have felt it incumbent upon me to keep a single eye to the needs of the Dante student, foremost among which is the inclusion of the places expressly mentioned in the *Comedy*. Yet it did not seem advisable to insert the names of all the Florentine families which Dante mentions; for how does it help the reader to understand the 104th line of the sixteenth canto of the *Paradiso* to know that the Sacchetti lived on the Mercato Nuovo, the Giuochi in the Via S. Margherita, the Fifanti on the Via del Garbo, and the Calfucci next to the deserted Church of Sant' Apollinare?

The case is different where the poet, in mentioning the name of a family, makes a direct reference to the place of their abode, as with the Caponsacchi, the Elisei, the Importuni, and the Peruzzi, or where the site of the family mansions has a bearing on historical events referred to in the poem, as in the case of the Donati, or of the Amidei, whose houses are near the statue of Mars, at the foot of which they murdered Buondelmonte for rejecting his bride, who was one of their family. But on the whole I have endeavoured not to be pedantically exclusive, and have put in the houses of a few families which, though not mentioned in the poem, are closely connected with Dante and the history of his times. Of these I have already mentioned the Allighieri, and in the same category come the Portinari, the Cerchi, and the Uberti.[2]

Of the public buildings, the Palazzo Vecchio is too important a landmark to be entirely omitted, and moreover it was already begun in Dante's lifetime, though far from

[1] See Appendix.—ED.

[2] The Cerchi are named in *Par.* xvi. 65 and referred to in lines 94-96. The Uberti are referred to in lines 109, 110.—ED.

its completion. We learn from Giov. Villani[1] that the houses of the Foraboschi and of other citizens were bought up in 1298, with a view to pulling them down and erecting the Government buildings on the site. The houses of the banished Uberti, which the enraged populace had destroyed in 1258, had been situated close by, but the hatred against the family, as traitors to their country, was so bitter as to prevent this site from being used for the building, and it was included in the Piazza (della Signoria).—I have therefore given the outline of the Palazzo Vecchio more or less as it stands at present, but have also indicated the approximate sites previously occupied by the houses of the Uberti and Foraboschi.

Several streets have been marked which are not directly referred to in the *Comedy*, but which will be of assistance in fixing the localities of other streets or buildings.

The same may be said of several churches, as for instance S. Apollinare and S. Firenze. Many churches give their names to the Piazzas that belong to them, and I have therefore adopted a continuous numbering for churches and piazzas. Both churches and piazzas have often changed considerably in form since Dante's time, as for instance the Piazza del Duomo, which has been greatly altered by the pulling down of the Hospital of St. John and the conversion of the Church of S. Reparata into the present Cathedral S. Maria del Fiore; and in the same way the Piazza della Signoria has been changed by the removal of the Church of S. Romolo and the group of houses abutting on it.

[1] viii. 26.

VII.—DANTE AND THE CONTI GUIDI

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 194-236.]

INTRODUCTORY

THERE is no Italian family, noble or royal, mentioned so often in Dante's writings as that of the Conti Guidi; nor is there any by which his own life was touched at so many different points. Their possessions lay on either slope of that part of the Apennines which divides the eastern portion of the plains of the Po (the Romagna) from the valley of the Arno. But although the history and genealogy of the family has been the subject of numerous treatises ever since Scipione Ammirato published his book in 1640, their family tree is still confused and disputed, so that we are often at a loss to determine to which member of the family a reference applies.

The whole clan is referred to in *Par.* xvi. 64 and 98. In *Inf.* xvi. 38 we meet Count Guidoguerra of the house of Dovádola; and he himself refers to the common ancestress of the five branches into which the clan divided at the beginning of the thirteenth century.—In *Inf.* xxx. 77 the false coiner Adam refers to three brothers of the house of Romena, two of whom he mentions by name, as the causes of his crime.—In *Purg.* xiv. 43 Guido del Duca makes a contemptuous thrust at the branch named after the fortress of Porciano.—Dante has been supposed, probably with justice, to be the author of a letter addressed to the Cardinal of Ostia, Niccolò Albertini, by the Count Alessandro di Romena and the banished Bianchi.—In another

letter Dante writes to two nephews of this very Alessandro to condole with them on the death of their uncle.—On the last day of March 1311 the poet addressed a threatening missive to the Florentines, and in the middle of April a letter of admonishment to Henry VII., who was letting the favourable moment for his expedition to Rome slip by, while he lingered over the siege of Brescia.[1] Both letters are dated from the confines of Tuscany, near the source of the Arno. Doubtless Dante was at the time in one of the fortresses belonging to the Guidi, Porciano or Romena, or lower down stream, in Poppi.—The only manuscript by which we know the first of these letters also gives two short Latin epistles, which bear the name of the Countess Palatine G. of Battifolle, and are addressed to the Empress Margaret of Brabant. The first of these is dated from Poppi, in the middle of May 1311. The Countess Palatine, as Passerini has shown, was Gherardesca, wife of Count Guidonovello of Battifolle and daughter of that Count Ugolino of Donoratico who was starved to death in the Tower of Famine. It seems more than probable that Dante, who may have been making a long sojourn with the Count, wrote these letters at Gherardesca's behest.—Pratovecchio, which lies in the Upper Arno valley, somewhat further up the river than Poppi, was in the possession of the house of Dovádola at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and specifically of Guido Salvatico, who (as Boccaccio tells us) offered the poet a refuge for a long period.—Finally, we may mention a tradition which still survives in Porciano, that the Count, who for some unknown reason was wroth with Dante, at one time kept him prisoner in the tower there.

[1] Rome was the ultimate goal of Henry's expedition, but it was, of course, Florence against which Dante urged him to direct his arms at once. The siege of Brescia began on May 19th, 1311 (Milman, v. 388), and is contemplated as possible amongst other contingencies in Dante's letter of April 18th (xiv. Kal. Mai.). *Ep.* vii.: 128.—ED

The first century of the history of the clan is in great part lost in legends which as early as Dante's time had come to pass for history, and have only lately been rejected as mythical. The difficulty of drawing up the family tree, even in historical times, is aggravated by the frequent recurrence of the same personal name, often borne by contemporaries, and almost always passed from grandfather to grandson, so that in the olden time the names Guido and Teudegrim (or Tegrimo) alternate from generation to generation, while later on the second name is usually replaced by Alessandro or Aghinulf.

'Dante researches'[1] inevitably lead to the history of the Conti Guidi, and more than a generation ago I attempted to make out a tree, though the means at my command were of the scantiest. The impulse was given by a projected edition of the poet's letters on which I was then engaged, but which was never completed. The inadequacy of my results was brought home to me during several interviews which I enjoyed in the autumn of 1844 with Count Carlo Troya in Naples, when, with the generosity so often met with among the Italian nobility and men of letters, he prepared me a complete family tree of the Counts of the house of Romena, with references to the most important sources of information.

Yet I could not feel satisfied with regard to certain details of the table; and in course of time Repetti, Fraticelli, and others published results which departed in some repects from it. I waited impatiently, therefore, for Litta's account of the Guidi family in his *Famiglie Celebri*. But Count Pompeo's admirable labours were brought to a close by death before he had reached the Guidi. Now, however, the work has been finished by his successor, Count Luigi Passerini, who, alas, has also been taken from us.

[1] 'Dante researches' = *Dante-Forschungen*, the title of Dr. Witte's collected essays, of which this volume is a selection.—ED.

The three parts, containing in all twenty 'Tavole,' are dated 1865-1867, but it was not till full ten years later that (thanks to the watchful zeal of our present librarian, Dr. Hartwig) Passerini's continuation, in its completeness, was added to our library. I saw at a glance how much it corrected and enlarged any knowledge of the Guidi. But the huge folios of the *Famiglie Celebri* are not accessible to all lovers of Dante, and I lie under special obligations to give an epitome of what I have gleaned from them in relation to the poet and his immortal work, because the notes to the third edition of my German translation of the *Comedy*, published two years ago, contain, I am sorry to say, much that is erroneous or at least highly questionable, concerning the Conti Guidi. Since I have had no opportunity whatever of examining archives, and have made but a limited use of the printed documents available (Mittarelli, Ildefonso, Fantuzzi, Repetti, etc.), I cannot pretend to contribute anything new on the question, but I may be permitted to express my difficulties as regards one or two of Passerini's conclusions.[1]

The archives have not even yet been sufficiently ransacked to clear up all the difficult points, but the prolonged and comprehensive labours of Dr. Theodor Wüstenfeld, to whom I owe the warmest thanks for his friendly and instructive counsels, will certainly be of essential service in this as in other directions.

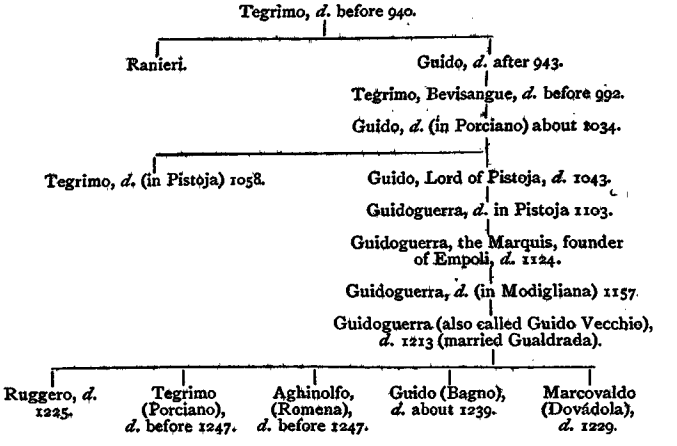
Giovanni Villani[2] and other chroniclers derive the race of the Guidi from a certain Count Guido, who came into Italy with the Emperor Otto the Great, in the second half, that is, of the tenth century, and was created Count Palatine of Tuscany, besides holding in feoff the county of Modigliana.—So far as documentary evidence goes, however, the founder of the family seems to have been one

[1] One of the profoundest of students of Italian family history wrote to me a short time ago, 'Nobody will ever get the genealogy of the Guidi straight.'

[2] *Cronica*, iv. 1 and v. 37.

Tegrimo. He was probably of Longobard, and certainly of Teutonic, extraction, and appears in the documents as early as 927. Modigliana however he acquired by his marriage with Engelrada of the house of the Onesti of Ravenna. (Cf. my *Göttliche Komödie*, notes to *Hölle* xvi. 37 and to *Paradies* xvi. 94.)

Early Times down to the Separation of the Four Branches.


Tegrimo, d. before 940.
Ranieri.
Guido, d. after 943.
Tegrimo, Bevisangue, d. before 992.
Guido, d. (in Porciano) about 1034.
Tegrimo, d. (in Pistoja) 1058.
Guido, Lord of Pistoja, d. 1043.
Guidoguerra, d. in Pistoja 1103.
Guidoguerra, the Marquis, founder of Empoli, d. 1124.
Guidoguerra, d. (in Modigliana) 1157.
Guidoguerra (also called Guido Vecchio), d. 1213 (married Gualdrada).
Ruggero, d. 1225.
Tegrimo (Porciano), d. before 1247.
Aghinolfo, (Romena), d. before 1247.
Guido (Bagno), d. about 1239.
Marcovaldo (Dovádola), d. 1229.

Of Tegrimo's three children, the two who are of interest to us are Guido and the deacon Ranieri. According to the Faenzan chronicler Tolsano, they were murdered with all their belongings for their deeds of violence against the bishop of Ravenna and others. The only one that escaped was a little son of Guido's, called (like his grandfather) Tegrimo, who was with his foster-mother outside Ravenna. He was surnamed Bevisangue (blood-drinker), in memory of the massacre by the Ravennese. Villani also relates the story, but names the rescued infant Guido.

This Tegrimo was followed again by a Guido, who left

two sons, Tegrimo and Guido, the latter of whom won the practical sovereignty over Pistoja. Of his four sons we need only mention the one who first added 'Guerra' to the family name of Guido. In spite of his warlike surname, however, he appears in the documents almost exclusively as making presents to churches and convents.

Of his five sons, only the second, Guidoguerra, calls for mention here. He was brought up by the Grand-Countess Matilda of Canossa as her adopted son, and was often with her. He joined the first crusade, and apparently was taken captive, but he lived for more than a quarter of a century after his return, during which time he too was a liberal donor to churches and convents. He had four daughters and one son, the third Guidoguerra, who, like Dante's ancestor Cacciaguida, took part in the second crusade under the first Conrad of Hohenstaufen. From this time till his death in 1157 we find him a faithful vassal in constant attendance on the Emperor Barbarossa.

The fourth Guidoguerra, called Guido Vecchio by the chroniclers, was a son of the third, and with him we come to the last of the legends which are interwoven with the early history of the clan. Villani tells us that when Kaiser Otto IV. came to Florence in the summer of 1209, and saw the Florentine beauties assembled in his honour in the Church of St. Reparata, Gualdrada, the daughter of Messer Bellincione Berti of the house of the Ravignani, pleased him most of all. Then Bellincione told the Emperor that he, as her father, would tell her to allow him to kiss her. But the maiden replied that no living man should kiss her unless he were her husband, whereat the Emperor praised her greatly. But Count Guido fell in love with her by reason of her graciousness, and since the Emperor too encouraged him he took her to wife (although she was of lowlier family than he) and without raising any question as to her dower.—The supposed Malespini tells this tale of

Guido (or Tegrimo) Bevisangue, and says that the Emperor gave the whole of the Casentino to the bridegroom as a wedding-gift.—Unfortunately for the truth of this story, there are documents showing that whole decades before Henry the Lion's son was elected Emperor (let alone his visit to Florence), Gualdrada had given gifts to churches and convents and made other dispositions as Guidoguerra's wife.

We have historical warrant, however, for saying that Guidoguerra, who remained true to Frederick Barbarossa until his death, entertained him in his Castle of Modigliana in the beginning of 1166. But Henry VI.'s policy was not calculated to retain the goodwill of the Italian Ghibellines, and during the struggles of Philip of Swabia and Otto of Brunswick for the crown the Pope's authority was predominant in Italy. Thus we find Guidoguerra allied with the Guelfic Florence at the turn of the century, and it does not surprise us to find (as the story about Gualdrada itself indicates) that he subsequently became attached to the Guelfic Emperor Otto, whom the Pope recognised. He died in 1213.

During this first period of almost three hundred years the Guidi were ever extending their influence, where not their actual rule, from the starting-point of their ancestral possessions in the Upper Apennine valleys. From Modigliana on the Marzeno, which joins the Lamone at the neighbouring Faenza, they won Tredozio, higher up the valley, and Marradi in the upper valley of the Lamone. High up on the Montone they held S. Benedetto, and further down stream Dovádola. Near the springs of the Savio (the stream that flows by Cesena) they held Bagno, which subsequently gave its name to one of the branches of the family. From Falterona, the hub of the Apennines, the

dominion stretched over the mountains eastwards in the uppermost portions of the Casentino to Romena, Porciano, Pratovecchio, and so on, and westwards to plant firm foot in the Mugello, through which the Sieve flows, and in the valley of the tributary Dicomano, where they held the almost inaccessible fortress of San Godenzo. From the Upper Sieve valley they crossed, north of Monte Morello, into the valley of the Bisenzio; and, till well into the thirteenth century, they held the fiercely contested Montemurlo.[1] It need hardly be said that hundreds of smaller castles and places not enumerated in this list were subject to them.

From this mountain centre their influence rayed out in various directions into the neighbouring plains. We find them sometimes as Podestàs, sometimes as Capitani, or as Imperial or Papal Vicars, and sometimes even as Church dignitaries filling numerous and important positions in the cities of Romagna, such as Forlì, Faenza, and Cesena, or in the Tuscan Pistoja, Siena, or Arezzo. Throughout this early period the family sided with the Emperors. A diploma of Henry VI.'s dated May 25th, 1191, acknowledges in the most flattering terms the great services rendered by the Conti Guidi to the three succeeding Hohenstaufen Emperors, and grants them in return ample privileges and extensive feoffs.

DIVISION INTO FOUR HOUSES

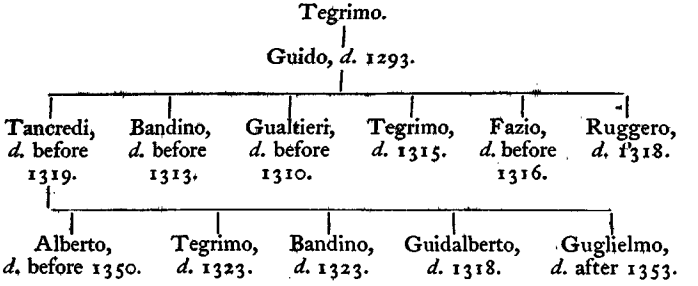
Guido Vecchio left two daughters and five sons. Of these, Ruggero, a faithful vassal of Frederick II., died in Sicily in 1225 and his brothers became his heirs. He may therefore be dismissed. But the four surviving brothers

[1] See my note to *Par.* xvi. 64. It was not until 1254 that the negotiations for the transfer of Montemurlo to the Florentine commonwealth were completed, since the fortress belonged to the whole family, and the sale could not be regularly effected without the consent of every member of it.

founded four distinct lines, usually known by the names of their most important possessions. From Tegrimo sprang the Counts of Modigliana and Porciano, from Aghinolfo those of Romena, from Guidoguerra the Counts of Bagno, and from Marcovaldo those of Dovádola.

THE LINE OF PORCIANO

The most important of these lines, in connection with Dante, are those of Porciano and Romena, with which two we will therefore begin.



Tegrimo, like his brother Ruggero, was unwaveringly faithful to Frederick II. The Emperor rewarded him with the hand of King Tancred's daughter Albiera, whose third husband he became. The Ghibelline cities of Pisa and Arezzo chose him as Podestà. In a battle with the Guelfic Faenza on which he had entered in conjunction with Forlì, he was taken prisoner for a time by the Bolognese allies of Faenza. In 1270 he is mentioned as already deceased. He lay under the ban of excommunication till after the Emperor's death, when Innocent IV. removed it.

Tegrimo's son Guido, who had fought under the flag of the second Frederick in his youth, at first held fast to the Ghibellines. But after the death of the great Hohenstaufen, and still more after that of his son Manfred, the old names of the Imperial and Papal parties came to be used in

Italy simply to distinguish friends from foes in petty struggles between city and city, or between potentate and potentate, and accordingly we find this Guido involved for many years in the struggles of the cities of Romagnola and their generals, such as Guido of Montefeltro and Maghinardo Pagani. The contests are interspersed with frequent reconciliations with the Church, removal of bans and restitution of the castles and property taken from him. He died at a very advanced age in May 1293.

He had eight sons and two daughters, but one of the sons, Guido, entered a monastery, and one, Conrad, of Guelfic sympathies, died before his father, and with these we have no further concern.

Of the other six sons, only one, Tancred, was consistently true to the Ghibelline flag. At first, indeed, all the other five appear as Ghibellines, in the struggles in Romagnola around Faenza and Forlì; but after the complete overthrow of the Hohenstaufens, and when Pope Martin IV. had established a temporary peace between the combatants in 1281, they attached themselves to the papal commissioner, Count Jean de Pas, and fought against many of their old companions in arms, amongst them Guido of Montefeltro.[1] Bandino even expelled his brothers Ruggero and Tancredi, after an obstinate street fight, from Faenza, he himself being Podestà and Tancredi Capitano del Popolo of the city. In fact they changed sides from time to time according as the prospects of the one or the other party seemed best suited to further their own advantage. Tegrimo seems to have gone out plundering, *sans phrase*, from his Castle of Porciano.

One of the brothers, Gualtieri, died in 1310. The others behaved discreditably enough on the occasion of Henry VII.'s expedition to Rome in 1311. In the summer of that year Bishop Nicholas of Butrinto set out in advance

[1] Cf. note to *Inf.* xxvii. 43.

of the Emperor to prepare the way for him, and Tegrimo went as far as the Tuscan border to meet him, conducting him and his followers to the Castle of San Godenzo with the greatest honour. Here they found the other surviving brothers, Tancredi, Fazio, Ruggero,[1] and Bandino, as well as numerous kinsmen belonging to other branches of the family. They all swore fealty to the Emperor, promising to support him loyally with their troops, and, with the sole exception of Tancred, every member of the house of the Guidi of Porciano broke his oath. Tegrimo himself, and also Bandino, entered into alliance with the Florentines against the Luxemburger. Nor was Ruggero more faithful than his brothers. These three were consequently deprived of all their feudal possessions, which the Emperor (in March 1313) handed over to Tancred, the only one who had remained faithful, thereby giving rise to a family feud which lasted into the next generation.

Dante was far from being the intolerant political partizan he has so often been painted, and he values the Guelf who is true to his convictions above the unprincipled adventurer who only calls himself a Ghibelline because he looks for some advantage from it. He does honour to the Guelf Malaspinas in his poem,[2] and he laid his wearied head to rest under the protection of the Guelf Polentas. But the want of principle of such as change sides with every shifting of the wind of fortune, and take and break their oaths according as the prospects of the one or the other side look brightest, rouses his fiercest indignation.[3]

It is such an outburst of indignation which leads him to put into the mouth of Guido del Duca, when describing the course of the Arno, those lines in which we can

[1] Fraticelli only mentions three sons of Tegrimo, the founder of the family (*Vita di Dante*, p. 211). Nor does he mention Ruggero, giving the third son as Guidalberto, who however was a son of Tancred's, a grandson therefore of Tegrimo's.

[2] *Purg.* viii. 124 *sq.*

[3] *Inf.* xxvii. 51.

scarcely help seeing a reference to the Guidi of Porciano:[1] 'Amongst foul swine (*porci*), more fit for gall-nuts than for other food prepared for human use, it [the valley of the Arno] guides its scanty bed at first.'

I formerly challenged this interpretation of the passage[2] (which is given at any rate as an alternative by Fanfani's 'Anonimo Fiorentino,' and expressly by Benvenuto da Imola), on the strength of the uncertain assumption that Dante had enjoyed the hospitality of the Counts of Porciano and could hardly have requited it by such invective. But the sole ground, as far as I know, for this assumption is the superscription of the two letters of March and April 1311, 'On the confines of Tuscany, under the source of Arno,' which would be just as appropriate to Romena, and perhaps even more so to Poppi.

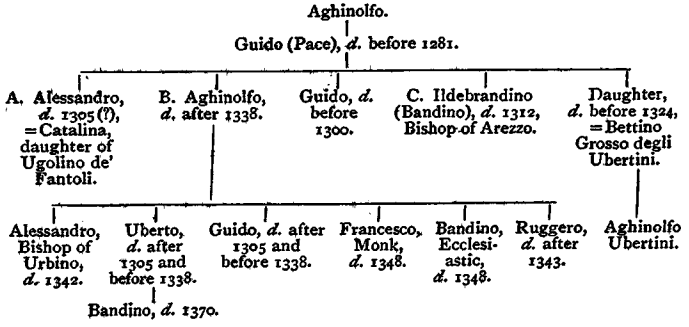
It may seem strange that Dante should launch his reproaches against the whole house, regardless of the unswerving loyalty with which Tancred, one of the brothers, accompanied Henry VII. to Rome, and thence to the siege of Florence—a loyalty which, as we have already seen, was splendidly acknowledged by the Emperor in the diploma of March 30th, 1313. But we may be sure that when his brothers had broken faith, Tancred so completely separated himself from them as no longer to be included in any reference to the Lords of Porciano; and moreover it would appear that at the time when the lines were written (about 1318) he was no longer living.

And for that matter, if the hospitality of the Lords of Porciano towards Dante were what tradition would have us believe,[3] he certainly owed them no gratitude for his sojourn with them!

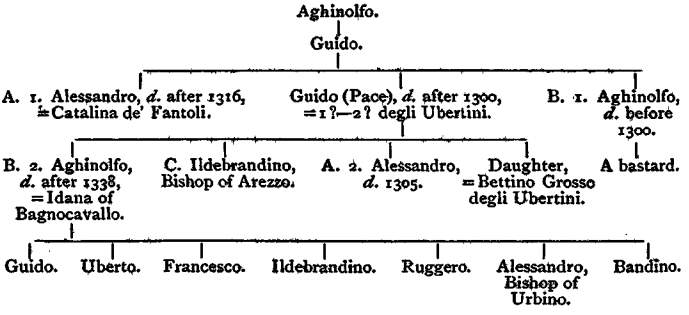
It is harder to unravel the relationships of Aghinolfo's descendants, the Romena branch of the Guidi.

[1] *Purg.* xiv. 43. [2] See my note to line 43. [3] See above, p. 171.

THE LINE OF ROMENA ACCORDING TO PASSERINI


Aghinolfo.
Guido (Pace), d. before 1281.
A. Alessandro, d. 1305 (?), =Catalina, daughter of Ugolino de' Fantoli.
B. Aghinolfo, d. after 1338.
Guido, d. before 1300.
C. Ildebrandino (Bandino), d. 1312, Bishop of Arezzo.
Daughter, d. before 1324, =Bettino Grosso degli Ubertini.
Alessandro, Bishop of Urbino, d. 1342.
Uberto, d. after 1305 and before 1338.
Guido, d. after 1305 and before 1338.
Francesco, Monk, d. 1348.
Bandino, Ecclesiastic, d. 1348.
Ruggero, d. after 1343.
Aghinolfo Ubertini.
Bandino, d. 1370.

THE LINE OF ROMENA ACCORDING TO TROYA



Aghinolfo himself, faithful to the tradition of his house, held by Frederick II., and the Emperor rewarded his services by creating him Count of the Romagna in 1239. The following year, however, at the siege of Faenza, he was taken prisoner by the Bolognese, who were hastening to the relief of the Guelf city, and his subsequent fate is unknown.

Aghinolfo's son, called Guidopace in contrast to his grandfather, Guidoguerra, also remained true to the Ghibelline cause, and in recognition of his own and his father's services, the Emperor bestowed on him numerous

privileges and feoffs in April 1247, as Henry VI. had done on Guidoguerra. In the year 1281 he is referred to as deceased.

AGHINOLFO'S GRANDSONS IN THE RIVAL GENEALOGIES

When we come to Guidopace's descendants opinions diverge.

The older view, which in spite of recent attacks is still generally held, is as follows:—Guidopace, besides three or four daughters, had four sons, Alessandro, Aghinolfo, Guido, and Ildebrandino (shortened to Bandino). Aghinolfo was the only one who left any children. Two of his sons, Uberto and Guido, will demand our attention presently. The others were called Alessandro, Francesco, Bandino, and Ruggero. One only of Guidopace's daughters has a certain interest for us.

Carlo Troya's genealogical tree, on the other hand,[1] inserts another generation between Guidopace's children and the above-mentioned Uberto and Guido and their brothers. He only recognises Alessandro, Aghinolfo, and Guido as sons of our Guidopace, and it is the son, and not the father, to whom he gives the surname Pace. As sons of his Guidopace (our Guido) he names a second Aghinolfo, Ildebrandino (usually considered the son of our 'Guidopace'), and a second Alessandro. This second Aghinolfo he makes the father of Uberto, Guido, and five other sons, besides two daughters.

The divergences in these genealogical trees are of great importance in relation to Dante's life and character; but before entering upon their discussion we must sum up what is known of the four sons (as we provisionally regard

[1] The persons as to whom there is a difference of opinion are marked in the two trees (p. 182) with the same capital letter. When Troya splits up into two individuals a single personage in the other scheme we have indicated it by the addition of 1, 2 to the capital.

them, with Passerini and others) of our Guidopace. On February 27th, 1281, Alessandro, Aghinolfo and Guido, signed the treaty of peace between the Florentine Guelfs and Ghibellines brought about by Cardinal Latino.—During the years 1285-1288 Alessandro and Aghinolfo are mentioned as Florentine, and therefore Guelf, commanders against Pisa and Arezzo. Whatever else we hear of Aghinolfo is taken by Troya to relate to the second Aghinolfo, whose very existence is contested on the other side.

Ildebrandino, a brother according to us, a nephew according to Troya, of the preceding, became Bishop of Arezzo in 1290. A year later, Pope Nicholas IV. made him Count of Romagna, and a little later his Ecclesiastical Vicar of the same province. Thither Alessandro and Aghinolfo followed him, but they all three made themselves hated by their insolence and violence. Aghinolfo (whom Tróya again makes his second Aghinolfo, nephew, not brother, of the first Alessandro) and his son Uberto were made prisoners in a battle with Maghinardo Pagani, and were only released after a long confinement, on condition that two other sons, Guido and Ruggero, were given up as hostages. After the settlement of affairs in Romagnola, Bandino went back to his diocese and Alessandro and Aghinolfo to the Casentino.

SUBSEQUENT LOT OF THE BROTHERS

1. *Alessandro of Romena.*

Leonardo Aretino says in his Life of Dante that when the Bianchi were expelled from Florence after the entry of Charles of Valois, in 1302, they met in Gargonza in the valley of the Ambra, Dante being of their number, and chose as leaders a council of twelve, with Count Alessandro of Romena at its head. According to Troya, this Alessandro is not the grandson of the original Aghinolfo of

Romena, but his great-grandson, and consequently a nephew of the Alessandro whom we have hitherto been speaking of. Shortly after this (March 1304) Niccolò Albertini, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, was sent as peacemaker to Florence by Pope Benedict XI. At first it seemed as if he would be successful, but the Florentines within grew more and more dissatisfied with him when it became known that he had secretly written letters of encouragement to the banished Bianchi. We still have the answer sent in the name of A[lexander of Romena] Ca[pitaneus], the Council, and the whole body of the Florentine Bianchi, and drawn up in all probability by Dante, who was, Leonardo assures us, one of the council of twelve. The date of this letter obviously lies somewhere between March and June 5th, 1304, at which date the Cardinal left the city in indignation.[1] It is uncertain whether it was written in the Casentino, maybe in the ancestral castle of the house of Romena, or in Arezzo, the episcopal seat of Bandino, who at that time had taken the side of the Populari (Ghibellini Verdi) against Uguccione della Faggiuola, who as Podestà had taken that of the nobles (Secchi). Leonardo says that after the meeting in Gargonza the Bianchi took Arezzo as their headquarters (*la sedia loro*).

Of Alessandro's doings in his capacity of leader of the Bianchi we know absolutely nothing. In connection with the unsuccessful attempt to surprise Florence from Lastra (July 20th, 1304) we find Baschiera della Tosa, Tolosato degli Uberti, and Aghinolfo di Romena mentioned, but not a word is said of Alessandro. In the preceding month, probably of the same year, we find a notarial document[2]

[1] See Appendix.—ED.

[2] Pelli, *Mem. p. la storia di D.*, p. 117, gives 1307 as the year of this document. But Troya in the *Veltro allegorico de Ghibell.*, 1856, p. 122, assures us that the date is entirely illegible, and appeals to Em. Repetti (cf. *Antologia* lxxiv., Florence, February 1827, p. 14), in support of the statement. [It has since been conclusively established that the date was 1302. See Appendix.—ED.]

drawn up at S. Godenzo, in which Dante and sixteen others of the Bianchi promise to indemnify Ugolino Ubaldini da Feliccione (brother of Ruggero, Archbishop of Pisa) and the other Ubaldini for any loss of territory or retainers they may incur in the projected struggle with Florence; particularly as regards the Castle of Monte Accianico. This document was drawn up in one of the fortresses of the Guidi, but neither does it contain any mention of Alessandro. Troya reasonably enough conjectures[1] that he (*i.e.* the *second* Alessandro, according to him) did not long survive the unsuccessful attempt to surprise Florence from Lastra, but died about 1305.

An undated letter addressed by Dante to Counts Uberto and Guido of Romena, nephews of Alessandro, refers to his decease, and is of great importance in connection with the problem now before us. He says:

'The illustrious Count, Alexander, your uncle, who within these few days has returned to the celestial fatherland, whence, after the spirit, he had come, was my liege, and to his memory, so long as I shall live in time, I shall bear allegiance; for his munificence, which is now abundantly recompensed with fit rewards beyond the stars, spontaneously made me his client long years ago. . . . Let then the greatest of the Tuscan families, of which he was so great an ornament, mourn; let all his friends and clients, whose hopes death hath so cruelly chastised, mourn; and, amongst these last, wretched I must mourn indeed, for when, banished from my fatherland in unjust exile, I fell a-pondering on my misfortunes, I was wont straightway to console myself with dear hope in him. . . . Wherefore, my most dear lieges, I implore you with suppliant exhortation that ye strive to mourn only in due measure, and to put the things of the sense behind, save in so far as they may be examples to you; and even as he most justly made you, as nearest unto himself, the heirs of his possessions, so do ye clothe yourselves with his noble character also. And on my own part I have, beside all this, to excuse myself to your discretion for my absence from the tearful obsequies; for neither negligence nor ingratitude, but the

[1] *Velt. alleg. de' Ghib.*, p. 125.

unlooked-for poverty which my exile hath brought upon me, is the cause of this. For she, like a fierce and persecuting foe, came upon me, horseless and unarmed, and thrust me into the dungeon of her captivity, wherein, though I struggle with all my might to escape, she doth pitilessly scheme to hold me, and hath till now prevailed.'

2. *Aghinolfo.*

Troya holds that Aghinolfo, the grandson of the first Count of Romena, died before 1300, and that all later notices of Aghinolfo di Romena refer to his supposed second Aghinolfo (B. 2). What they amount to is that in the struggles which arose between the Ghibelline Arezzo and the Guelf Florence Aghinolfo had already taken the Ghibelline side, and afterwards united with Henry VII. in his expedition to Rome, and followed him as a brave and faithful vassal until his death. For these services he received large rewards from the Luxemburger on June 7th, 1312, as his ancestors had done from the Hohenstaufens; while the Florentines outlawed him on March 29th, 1313. He was taken prisoner by the Count of Mangona in the further conflicts with Florence, and in October 1318 made peace with the Florentines, who removed their ban on receiving his promise of faithful alliance. Thenceforth the republic stood by him more than once in time of need, while he, on his side, hastened to her aid (though in vain) against Castruccio Castracani. As his will is dated November 15th, 1338, he must have attained a very great age, whereby the weakness therein referred to (*corpore languens*) would be naturally enough explained. His sons, Oberto and Guido, the recipients of Dante's letter of condolence, are referred to in the testament as already dead.

3. *Ildebrandino and Guido.*

Bishop Ildebrandino (C.), according to our genealogy, was a brother of the first Alessandro and Aghinolfo (A. and

B.). Troya, however, considers him their nephew, and a brother of the second bearers of these names, whom he postulates (A. 2 and B. 2). We have already described his earlier life. The Ghibelline traditions of his house had not prevented him from entering into friendly relations with the Guelfs, but now stood him in good stead with Henry VII., who did not wish to confine his favours exclusively to one party, but endeavoured to bring the two together. The Emperor made him lifelong Vicar of Arezzo in 1309, but he died in the train of his feudal overlord at Pisa, in July 1312.

The fourth brother, Guido, to whom Troya gives the surname Pace, which is generally assigned to his father, is supposed by this historian to have had three sons (Ildebrandino, C., and the supposed Aghinolfo and Alessandro of the second generation, B. 2 and A. 2) and a daughter. We know little more of him than that in the years 1283 and 1288 he was successively Podestà of Siena and of Todi. Troya believes that he was still living in 1300, but we find no mention of him after 1283, so that Passerini thinks he may have fallen in the battle of Campaldino in 1289.

MAESTRO ADAMO AND THE FALSE COINING

The importance of these relationships rests on a fact we have not yet mentioned. In the year 1281, as we are told by Paolino Pieri, a considerable number of Florentine golden thalers were found in the house of the Anchioni in Florence,[1] which, instead of consisting of pure gold, according to the regulation standard, were composed of seven parts gold and one part some base metal. It was discovered that they came from Romena, and had been made by one Maestro Adamo of Brescia. This Adam perished,

[1] Or rather in the Borgo San Lorenzo in Mugello.—Troya, *Veltro alleg. di Dante*, p. 25.

being burnt to death; and when Dante met him, swelled as by dropsy till incapable of motion, in the last pit of the eighth circle (the pit of forgers), he said to the poet:

'But could I see the dismal soul of Guido or of Alessandro or their brother in this place, I would not sell the sight for Fonte Branda. One of them is in here already, if the raging souls that go around speak truth. But what good is that to me, since my limbs are bound? If I were still so agile only that in a hundred years I could make one inch, I should have set out e'er now upon the path searching for him amongst this loathly folk, although the circuit be eleven miles, and it be not less than half a mile across. It is along of them that I am of this household. It was they that led me to strike the florins with three carats of alloy.'

All are agreed as to the individuality of the two brothers whom Maestro Adamo mentions by name. Even Troya counts them as belonging to the earlier generation, sons of the grandson of Guidoguerra and Gualdrada, not to the later generation imagined by him. Nor, for those who, with Troya, assign the Bishop Bandino to this later generation, can there be any question as to who the third brother was either, since there is only one, Aghinolfo, left. But for us there is at least the possibility that the third brother is Bandino, not Aghinolfo; and indeed what we know of his doings in Romagna and as Papal Vicar is not such as to prove him incapable of the crime in question. At the same time, it hardly seems credible that the ecclesiastic Bandino, if he were really guilty of so deep an offence against the laws of the Church, should have been made a Bishop, and intrusted with other important missions, while his brother Guido, for the same crime, was again put under the ban of Florence, from which, according to Passerini, he had only just been relieved. We are therefore led to the conclusion that Aghinolfo, not Bandino, was the third false coiner; and this is the view of Fanfani's Anonimo and other Commentators. Passerini, strangely enough, does not touch on the question at all.

DANTE'S APPARENT INGRATITUDE

Most critics consider that 'the one already in Hell'[1] at the time of the poet's journey was Guido. Troya thinks it was Aghinolfo (B. 1), taking all later references to Aghinolfo da Romena as applying to his second Aghinolfo (B. 2) belonging to the next generation. He appeals to a document of March 13th, 1300, in which an illegitimate son of the deceased Aghinolfo (*q.* Aghinolfi,—the *q.* being understood as *quondam* = 'late') applies for licence to sell a certain piece of land.[2] According to Borghini, however, this document is addressed to Aghinolfo himself, who is still alive.[3] It can only be by an oversight that Philalethes says it is hard to decide whether the brother already dead in 1300 is Guido or Alexander, since we have full proof, from several distinct sources, that the latter lived at least till 1304.[4]

But these questions sink into insignificance in comparison with the contrast between the infamy heaped on all

[1] *Inf.* xxx. 79.

[2] Ildefonso di S. Luigi, *Delizie degli erud. Tosc.*, viii. 181.

[3] Gius. Todeschini, *Scritti su Dante* (1872), i. 216. [*I.e.* Ildefonso (eighteenth century) gives a *summary* only of the document; and himself notes that Borghini (sixteenth century) read it as presented in the person of (*in faccia di*) Alexander, not his son. Todeschini points out that Ildefonso himself gives a reference, on p. 147, that supports Borghini's reading.—ED.]

[4] Benvenuto da Imola, to whom this documentary evidence was unknown, in commenting on the words 'One of them is in here already,' says, 'That is: the soul of Alexander is in Hell, for he is amongst the traitors against kindred, as will be seen hereafter, Canto xxxii., where he names Alexander.' The worthy Rambaldi might have seen however, from line 85, that the man to whom Adam referred was not only in the same eighth circle of Hell, but in the same tenth pit as himself; not in the first division of the ninth circle. The poet, as a fact, does not name any Alessandro in Canto xxxii., but the two brothers depicted in line 42 undoubtedly are the Counts Alessandro and Napoleone di Mangona. The Commentator continues: 'But truly I do not rightly see of whom he is speaking. For that Alexander, whom the author now places in the ice, was not of the Counts Guidi of Romena, but of the Counts Alberti.' —Fanfani's Anonimo also says, on line 79, 'To wit, Count Alexander.'

three brothers in the *Inferno*, and the unmeasured praise of one of them in the letter written to his nephews perhaps ten years previously.

If a man had been openly convicted of fraud, would Dante, who calls himself the bard of justice (*rectitudo*)[1] hold him up to his nephews (if even the crime had been committed wellnigh a quarter of a century before) as a model for their conduct, in whose blameless character they were to robe themselves? Still less can we admit that *if he had* spoken of his munificence, experienced for many years, as binding him in lifelong gratitude, he would a few years afterwards relegate him, by the mouth of Master Adam,[2] to one of the lowest abysses of Hell. Nor could the poet's wrath be here accounted for, as in the case of the Guidi of Porciano, by acts of treachery towards the Luxemburger. For while the Counts of Romena never, so far as we know, went to meet the Emperor, or invited him to visit one of their fortresses, or did homage to him, or made any collective promise of faithfulness, yet the only two still living, Aghinolfo and Ildebrandino, with the former's son Ruggero, had, as a fact, stood by him till the end.

TODESCHINI'S ATTEMPTED SOLUTION

Gius. Todeschini's solution is simplicity itself.[3] He considers the letter to the Counts Guido and Uberto to be a mere literary exercise of some unknown writer, and declares it to be an arbitrary assumption that 'A. CA.' in the letter to the Cardinal of Ostia stands for 'Alexander Capitaneus'; nor does he place any faith in the statements made by Leonardo Aretino in his Life of Dante ('a slight and carelessly written thing'); and therefore he denies that

[1] *Vulgaris Eloquentia*, ii. 2: 83.
[2] Cf. Troya, *V. alleg. d. Ghib.*, pp. 125-127.
[3] *Scritti su Dante*, i. 211-259.

Dante and Alessandro da Romena ever came into close relations with each other at all. It is true that he does not dispute the authenticity of the notarial instrument drawn up by Giovanni di Buto of Ampinana at S. Godenzo, but he disagrees both with Pelli, who would date it 1307, and with Troya, who makes it 1304, and himself assigns it to 1302. Appealing for support to *Par.* xvii. 61-69, he concludes (p. 254 *sq.*) that from quite an early period of his exile Dante broke off all relations with the rest of the exiled Bianchi, and found a refuge with Bartolomeo della Scala in Verona, as early as 1303.

The genuineness of the letter of condolence however, and the obviousness of the interpretation of the initials in the letter sent in the name of the banished Bianchi to the Cardinal Albertini, are so patent, while the reliability of Leonardo Bruni's Life, as contrasted with that of Boccáccio, has been so often insisted on, that, as far as I know, Todeschini's heroic method of removing the charge of ingratitude brought against Dante has nowhere met with assent.[1]

CARLO TROYA'S SOLUTION

Troya's more seductive way out of the difficulty is closely connected with his reconstruction of the family tree, differing considerably, as will be remembered, from the usually accepted genealogy. According to him, Alessandro, who was a party, together with his two brothers, to Master Adam's false coining in 1281, was still living in 1316; for there is a document in the Azzurrinian archives, dated Sept. 6th of that year, which in referring to Catalina of Faenza, daughter of Ugolino de' Fantolini da Cerfugnano, calls her 'wife of the illustrious Lord Alexander of Romena, by grace of God Count Palatine of Tuscany.'

[1] Scartazzini, Kraus, and others have since adopted Todeschini's opinion as to both letters. Cf. Appendix.—Ed.

On the other hand, the Alexander da Romena who was leader of the Florentine Bianchi, and the subject of Dante's letter of condolence, was a nephew of the above-named Alessandro, and died, as already said, in 1304 or 1305. Gratitude to him need not prevent Dante's laying a crime to the charge of his uncle, of which all the world knew he was guilty.

I have called this solution seductive, and Pietro Fraticelli has shown his acceptance of it, both in his note in his edition of the *Divine Comedy* and in his Life of Dante,[1] by reproducing without comment the data of Troya's genealogical tree. And in the few sheets of the second edition of my collection of Dante's letters, printed in 1845 but never published, I too expressed my general agreement with this view, after a full exposition of the grounds on which it was based, making reservations however as regards some of the details, while Scartazzini,[2] perhaps the only Dante Commentator who has gone into this important point, follows suit.[3]

Passerini and Todeschini have declared against it, and Dr. Theod. Wüstenfeld, after comprehensive researches, has reached the same conclusion. I have to thank him for his generous permission to make use of the copious material he has collected on the subject.

GROUNDS OF TODESCHINI'S REJECTION OF THE THEORY[4]

Todeschini, who leaves the document of 1316 unassailed, shatters the arch of Troya's assumptions by withdrawing a keystone from it, namely the twofold personality of Aghinolfo. The *Memorie abbreviate de' Conti Guidi*, published by the Padre Ildefonso,[5] preserve a deed dated

[1] Florence, 1861, pp. 210, 211.
[2] Ed. of *Divine Comedy*, note on *Inf.* xxx. 77.
[3] Reversed in his edition of 1893.—ED.
[4] See *Postscript*, pp. 206 *sq.*
[5] *Delizie*, t. viii. p. 188.

1355, in which the Emperor Charles IV. bestows castles, cities, and lands on the Count Bandino of Romena, at the same time giving the descent of the said Bandino right up to Aghinolfo, the founder of the house of Romena. Now, according to Troya's theory, Bandino's genealogy would have run thus :—Bandino, son of Uberto, son of Aghinolfo, son of Guido, son of Guido, son of Aghinolfo; but in fact the deed says, 'To Count Bandino of Romena, son of the late Uberto, son of the late Aghinolfo, son of [the late[1]] Guido, son of the late Aghinolfo, Count of Romena.' In other words, we have only one Guido, viz. Guidoguerra's grandson (not his great-grandson), instead of two in succession. This makes the grandfather of the recipient of the deed of gift, Aghinolfo by name, the son, and not the grandson, of the first Guido of the house of Romena, *our* Guidopace. And Troya himself admits that the first Guido was the father of the forgers Guido and Alessandro. Thus the deed leaves no room for a second Aghinolfo, also grandfather of Bandino but son of *Troya's* Guidopace. —The idea that the scribe might easily have omitted the repetition of '*q.* Guidonis' by an oversight in drawing up the deed, may readily occur, but it is barred by the fact that a little further on in the same document there is a reference to a deed of gift by Frederick II. to Aghinolfo's son Guido(pace), made in April 1247, and this Guido is called Bandino's 'proavus,' *i.e.* father of his grandfather, whereas according to Troya he ought to be called 'abavus,' grandfather of his grandfather.

It would appear then that Troya's two Aghinolfos are one and the same man. Now he supposed each of them to have a brother Alessandro, and these two Alessandros must therefore likewise run into one. The only escape would be the extremely unnatural one (not suggested

[1] This '*quondam*,' or rather its usual abbreviation '*q*.' is wanting in the MS.

by Troya or any one else) of supposing that two brothers received one and the same baptismal name.

PASSERINI'S AND WÜSTENFELD'S OBJECTIONS

But Troya's evidence for the existence of two Alessandros, nephew and uncle, living at the same time, rests mainly on the document dated, according to Mittarelli,[1] September 6th, 1316. Now Passerini[2] and Wüstenfeld give good grounds for doubting the correctness of the date. To begin with, Passerini urges that Tonduzzi,[3] who lived a century earlier than Mittarelli, expressly says that even in his time the year and day of the document were undecipherable, owing to the state of the parchment. Mittarelli's date, he adds, cannot possibly be the correct one, since the text speaks of Taddeo of Montefeltro as still living, and he died in 1282. Passerini (following the practice of Litta's tables) does not give the documentary evidence on which this last date rests.[4]

According to Wüstenfeld, Taddeo did not die till 1299. But he adds that the document refers to the landed possessions left by Ugolino Fantolini as not yet divided between his two daughters, Catalina, wife of Alessandro da Romena, and Agnesina, wife of Taddeo da Montefeltro. Now in 1291 the estates had been partitioned, and Agnesina sold her portion to Maghinardo Pagano of Susinana and the Counts of Conio.[5] But if we have to date the document before 1299, and indeed before 1291, the only year that

[1] *Accessiones Faventinæ*, col. 541 (1771).
[2] *Continuation of Litta's Famiglie celebri*, Dispensa 150, Tav. xii., and *Curiosità letter.*, ii. 27.
[3] *Storie di Faenza*, 1675.
[4] According to del Lungo (*Dino Compagni*, ii. 593) Passerini has confounded two Taddeos, and the one here referred to was certainly living in 1297.—ED.
[5] Cf. Troya, *Veltro alleg. d. Ghib.*, pp. 355-357.

takes the place assigned in the indiction, is 1286. And the number MCCLXXXVI. could easily have been misread MCCCXVI. if the L had been mistaken for a C, and the XX following it had become illegible owing to the damaged state of the parchment.

AGHINOLFO DEGLI UBERTINI, A NEPHEW OF ALESSANDRO

Finally, we must touch on the elaborate interpretation put by Troya on a passage in Giov. Villani's Chronicle, although it has no kind of decisive bearing on the present problem. The Chronicler tells[1] how in 1324 the Florentines acquired Lanciolina in the Arno valley, which had hitherto belonged to Aghinolfo, son of Bettino Grosso, of the Ubertini, who had received it from his uncle Alessandro in his mother's right. From this we gather that Aghinolfo Ubertini's mother was a sister of Count Alessandro, that Lanciolina was a part of her inheritance, or perhaps marriage portion, but was left in Alessandro's occupation and control, so that when her son inherited it, it was from Alessandro's hands that he actually received it.[2]

Troya, however, reads the passage otherwise,[3] and thinks himself justified in drawing the following conclusions from it. The mother of Grosso Ubertini's wife (herself an Ubertini) was sister-in-law of the elder Alessandro, having married his brother Guido (Troya's Guidopace). She was his second wife, and the mother of Alessandro (A. 2) the

[1] *Cronica*, ix. 272.

[2] This is also Passerini's interpretation of the document.

[3] The words are 'il quale [castello] avea avuto per retaggio della madre, dal conte Alessandro da Romena, suo zio.' Aghinolfo Ubertini is the subject of 'avea,' and the natural way to understand the sentence is to take 'dal conte etc.' as dependent on 'avuto,' and 'suo' as referring to Aghinolfo. I gather that Troya understands 'his mother's inheritance, which came to *her* from *her* uncle Alessandro.' I have ventured to recast this whole paragraph on Troya's interpretation of the document; as it stands in Witte's text it appears to me barely intelligible.—ED.

captain of the Bianchi, and of the daughter that married Bettino Ubertini. Her husband Guido gave her Lanciolina as her dowry (or rather settled it upon her), or left it to her in some form. She survived her son Alessandro, and her heritage then went to her daughter, which shows that the two other sons of her husband (Master Adam's '*anima trista*') must have been the offspring of a previous marriage.

Troya was driven to hazarding these elaborate suppositions in order to reconcile his own theory with Villani's data, but they are far indeed from affording independent support to the theories themselves.

THE RESULT

As far as I know, we have no positive evidence that Dante was ever the guest of the Counts of Romena, although Passerini and Fraticelli assume it as unquestionable, and the exact description of the locality in *Inf.* xxx. 64-73 obviously betrays personal familiarity with it. But in any case we should have supposed that such a relationship to one of the brothers as is depicted in the letter of condolence would have prevented the poet's attack on any of the three, let alone his grouping them all together. And the case is made worse by another consideration. Even if Dante felt constrained to denounce a deed which had been done a generation before the time at which the poem was written, he was not compelled actually to give the *name* of the man to whom he had declared himself under such a lifelong debt of gratitude. The sense would have been just the same, and the line would have been in no way injured if he had written

'*Di Guido, o d' Aghinolfo o di lor frate.*'

We must regretfully confess that we are unable to exculpate the poet; for all the theories advanced for this

purpose appear untenable. But we can at least urge 'extenuating circumstances,' of which there are several.

In the first place, it must be remembered that Dante does not take the words in the thirtieth canto of the *Inferno* upon his own lips. They are spoken by Master Adam. There is no lack of instances in which Dante puts one verdict into the mouth of some shade he meets, and in some other place takes occasion to give a widely divergent judgment of his own.[1] And certainly Master Adam had reason enough to feel embittered in Hell against the brothers who had brought him to a fiery death while they themselves went free, or at least suffered no such punishment as his. For we find Alexander in the train of the Imperial Vicar in S. Miniato in the very next year, 1282; after which he became Podestà of Faenza in 1287, and a leader of the Guelfs of Tuscany against Arezzo in 1288. Guido too was chosen by Siena for her Podestà in 1283, and Aghinolfo succeeded him in the following year.

Again, the sudden shattering of the poet's hopes at the death of Alessandro might account for the exaggerated praise in the letter to his nephews. In such a moment, and when addressing the nearest relations of the deceased, one would gladly forget an offence committed ten years before, and would feel that one could scarcely say enough in praise and gratitude.

Subsequent experience, however, may have taught Dante the indifference of the Guidi to the affairs of the banished Bianchi. It is easily conceivable, as Todeschini suggests, that the poet's suspicions gained strength as time went on, and he came to question whether, despite his position as leader, Alessandro had not dealt unfaithfully with the banished Bianchi—perhaps shown himself open to the persuasions, maybe even to the gold, of his hereditary friends the Florentines. If this were so it is quite con-

[1] Cf. my note to *Purg.* iii. 115.

ceivable that the brief letter of condolence, written in an overwrought moment, and preserved to us by a mere chance, might have completely escaped the memory of the writer himself in the course of a decade.

Nevetheless I cannot pretend to think that these circumstances alone would account for the passionate denunciation which, even though it is put into the mouth of another, yet forms an integral part of the poem. I believe then that here, as in other cases where the poet breaks out into expressions of anger inexplicable to us,[1] there must be some cause, of which we know and can discover nothing, that would explain, if not excuse it.

DATE OF UBERTO DA ROMENA'S DEATH

We cannot leave the Romena branch of the Guidi without pointing out a slight mistake in Passerini's Table XIII. In Table XII. he repeatedly refers to Dante's letter to Uberto and Guido da Romena (which he too dates in 1305) in such a manner as to leave no doubt that he regards it as authentic; yet in the following Table he says of this same Uberto that Maghinardo Pagani did not release him from the Castle of Calamello till the year 1294, and adds, 'he must have died not long afterwards, as he was certainly (*certamente*) dead quite at the beginning of the fourteenth century.' We really do know, from his father's will of 1338, that in that year he was already dead.

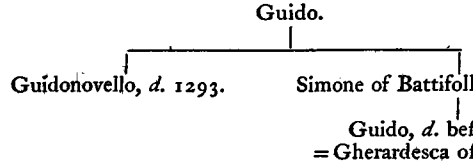
We now turn to the first-born son of Guidaguerra and Gualdrada, namely Guido, the founder of the house of Bagno and Battifolle. Guido himself, like his brothers, did faithful service to the second Frederick, and he seems to have died about 1239.

His sons were Guidonovello and Simone, the former of whom was one of the most prominent Ghibellines of the

[1] E.g. *Inf.* viii. 37-60.

thirteenth century. We find him taking part in the battle of the Arbia (*Inf.* x. 86), and it is he who is said to have made the barbarous proposal which Farinata takes credit for having thwarted in the lines that follow. Then he governed Florence with a stern hand for six years as King Manfred's vicar, until Charles of Anjou's victory

THE LINE OF BAGNO AND BATTIFOLLE



once more allowed the Guelfs to raise their heads in Tuscany as elsewhere. It was with disastrous precipitancy that he left Florence on November 11th, 1269,[1] but he fought for the Ghibellines afterwards as opportunity offered, although with varying success. In 1275 he led the armies of Faenza and Forlì against the Guelfs of Bologna. At Colle di Val d'Elsa,[2] however, in 1269 he was defeated with the Sienese; and the battle of Campaldino[3] was still more disastrous to him, for he was accused of having withdrawn to Poppi, to protect his castle there from the attacks of the Florentines, instead of joining fairly in the fight.

His brother Simone was for many years one of the fiercest of the Ghibellines, and as Podestà of Arezzo in 1263 made ruthless work against the Guelfs of that city. We hear of his horrible cruelty in other connections also. In 1273 he had a fierce quarrel with his brother Guidonovello over some disputed family possessions, after which he was reconciled with Pope Gregory x., and, through his intervention, with the Florentine Republic. His descendants

[1] Note on *Inf.* xxiii. 103. [2] Note on *Purg.* xi. 121.
[3] *Purg.* v. 92

called themselves Counts of Battifolle in distinction to Guidonovello's descendants.

Simone's son Guido followed the flag to which his father had turned in later times. In the eighties he fought under Charles of Anjou in Sicily against Peter of Aragon. At Campaldino he stood on the side of the Florentines against his uncle Guidonovello. Then we hear scarcely a word of him for more than twenty years.—It was probably from Cremona, before the unfortunate siege of Brescia, that Queen Margaret (always eager to win support for her husband, and often with better success than in this instance) wrote a letter to Gherardesca, Guido's wife. We possess Gherardesca's answer of May 16th, 1311, which it is conjectured was composed by Dante; and also the answer to a second letter of the Queen's. Both of them conceal, under the language of extravagant devotion, a certain surprise at this step of Margaret. As regards Guido, after whom Margaret had inquired in her first letter, we merely hear that he is well.

The second letter closes with the comprehensive wish 'that the Eternal Ruler of the world may extend the hand of his assisting grace to the auspicious undertakings of Cæsar and Augusta; that he who subdued barbarous nations and citizens to the command of the Roman Empire for the protection of mortal things, may re-order for the better the household of this frenzied age, under the triumph and glory of his Henry.'—So there is nothing in the shape of definite promises in this letter either.

What Guido actually did was to send armed assistance to the besieged Florentines, while at home in the Casentino he fought against the Ghibellines in conjunction with Bernardino da Polenta. After the Emperor's death, Guido ruled first Florence and afterwards Genoa as vicar of King Robert of Naples.

If, as Passerini[1] seems also to believe, the two letters of

[1] Table XIV.

the Countess Gherardesca were drawn up by Dante, they would furnish adequate ground for supposing that the poet spent some considerable time in Poppi or the neighbouring Battifolle; and there is at least a probability that the two letters dated 'from the sources of the Arno' were written from the same place. But this particular refuge of the poet's is not mentioned by any one of the biographers.

LINE OF DOVÁDOLA

Marcovaldo.

Guidoguerra, *d.* 1272. — Ruggero, *d.* 1268.

Guidosalvatico = Manentessa of Montefeltro, *d.* after 1299.

Ruggero, *d.* 1332.

In his youth, Marcovaldo, founder of the line of Dovádola, fought under the banner of the second Frederick of Hohenstaufen. But his wife, Beatrice, one of the Alberti of Capraja, who were pronounced Guelfs, drew him over to the other camp, and family quarrels over his inheritance adding their influence, he became a passionate partizan of the Guelfs.

Dante meets the more celebrated of Marcovaldo's two sons, Guidoguerra, together with two other noble Florentines, in the third belt of the seventh circle of the Inferno,[1] among the sodomites. Passerini[2] says that it was the Count's prominent position among the Guelfs of Tuscany which so kindled the poet's ire as to determine him to cover Guidoguerra with eternal infamy by placing him amongst the carnal sinners against nature.

But I must emphatically deny that there is any justification for such a charge. The poet selects for his censure,

[1] *Inf.* xvi. 37. [2] Table XVIII.

sins (notorious sins by preference) with perfect indifference as to whether Ghibellines or Guelfs committed them. But he holds that earthly nobleness may well subsist side by side with sins, especially of incontinence. He attributes the very same sin to Brunetto Latini, but he meets him, in the immediately preceding canto, with moving veneration and gratitude; and with what heartfelt reverence does he greet Guido Guinizelli and the other two poets who are expiating the same sin,[1] in canto xxvi. of *Purgatory*!

The nature of Guidoguerra's sin is only indicated by his place of punishment, but his merits are proclaimed aloud in the directest manner. When the poet meets the three noble Guelfs, he says (in his own person), 'and ever more with love have I rehearsed and hearkened to your deeds and honoured names'; while into Jacopo Rusticucci's mouth (xvi. 38) he puts the panegyric of Guidoguerra in particular (afterwards imitated in Tasso's well-known line): 'And in his life much wrought he with his brain, much with his sword.' It were scarcely possible to accord a larger measure of recognition to the merits of one of the condemned.

Guidoguerra joined the Guelfs in his early youth, and his first important feat of arms was the relief of Ostina, which was besieged by the Ghibellines in 1250. The result of his success was the triumph of the Guelfic reaction in Florence also. Ten years later he is mentioned as vainly dissuading the march on Siena which ended so disastrously for the Guelfs.[2] In 1265 he joined Charles of Anjou as soon as he entered Italy, with his mounted troop of expatriated Florentines, and played an important part in the victory of Benevento.[3] Manfred's fall led to a fresh revolution in Florence, and Guidoguerra assumed the

[1] Not so, though it is often said or implied. Guido and Arnaldo (there are only two, not three, poets named) are circling counter-clockwise, with Dante. The unnatural offenders are circling clockwise against them.—ED.

[2] Cf. my note on *Inf.* x. 85.

[3] Cf. my note on *Purg.* iii. 112, 118

guidance of the Republic as King Charles's vicar, replacing his cousin Guidonovello. Here, and wherever his influence extended, he showed his enmity towards the Ghibellines, regardless even of written pledges to the contrary; his arbitrary conduct at last led to a breach with Florence herself. He died in 1272, at his home in Montevarchi, in the Arno valley.

Marcovaldo's second son, Ruggero, gave proof of his staunch Guelf principles in his youth, by rejecting Frederick II.'s invitation to come to his court; but we hear more of his numerous gifts to churches, convents, and religious foundations, than of his feats of arms.

We find Ruggero's son, Guidosalvatico, chiefly in the Romagna in the sixties and seventies, involved in its constant petty struggles, one of which, in 1276, brought him into opposition to his cousin Guidonovello. He was chosen Captain-general of the Taglia (allied troops) of the Guelfs in Tuscany in 1282, but had no opportunity of doing any conspicuous deed of arms. In the battle of Campaldino he led a considerable Sienese force as Podestà of the city. When, in the last year of the century, the Florentine Guelfs divided into the parties of the Bianchi and Neri, he joined the Neri, the party opposed to Dante's. During Henry VII.'s siege of Florence, Guidosalvatico, like his cousin Guido of Battifolle, sent armed assistance to Bernardino of Polenta, who was waging a petty war with the Ghibellines of the upper valley of the Arno.

Salvatico is the only one of the Conti Guidi whom Boccaccio distinctly states to have entertained Dante. The biographer places this stay after the poet's first visit to Verona[1] and before that to Maroello Malaspina; that is to say, in the period between the failure of the attempted return of the Bianchi and the revival of Dante's hopes

[1] He says to 'Alberto,' but means presumably to 'Albuino' della Scala.

with the accession of Henry VII. It is possible therefore that it was here that Dante found leisure to write the *Convivio* and *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, which belong to this period. Party feeling had lost something of its bitterness, and it may well be that it was just at this time that Dante, having lost all hope of a return by force of arms, and now relying on the influence of distinguished Guelf friends, approached his native city, as a petitioner indeed, but one conscious of entire innocence. This is his attitude in the third chapter of the *Convivio* and in the lost letter beginning '*Popule mee, quid feci tibi?*'[1]

Boccaccio says expressly that Dante visited Guidosalvatico in the Casentino. The chief possessions of Salvatico, according to the documentary evidence known to me, were Bagno and Montegranelli; but Pelli[2] expressly mentions Prato Vecchio, which lies high up in the Casentino.

An essential share in the hospitality extended to the poet is attributed to Guido's wife, Manentessa, daughter of Buonconte of Montefeltro. It is said that it was at her instigation that the poet wrote a four-lined epigram against a monk who had spoken slightingly of the letter *I* (??). The story calls the Countess Caterina.[3]

[1] See Leonardo Bruni.—ED.

[2] P. 134, *Mem. Stor. Dante.*

[3] The epigram runs somewhat thus: 'Thou who dost scoff at the ninth letter [*i*], and art of less account than that before it [*h*], go now and double the one after it, for for naught else has nature fitted thee.' Crescimbeni (*Istoria della volgar poesia*, i. 355), who quotes the verse as universally known, but does not give his source, tells the following tale: A certain man had once scoffed at Dante because of his small bodily stature (?), and had compared him to the least conspicuous letter of the alphabet, namely *i*. But the poet put him to shame and silence by this witty epigram.—Passerini, on the other hand (Table XVIII.), gives the story as it stands in the text, but without crediting it. He adds, 'I think it probable that Dante wrote the four lines at the instance of the wife of Alessandro da Romena, who was, as a matter of fact, called Catherine, and who was much attached (?) to the poet.' [It is difficult to understand how any serious student of Dante can concern himself with the dull buffoonery of this play on the Latin *cacare*, or the still duller stroke of attributing it to Dante.—ED.]

Salvatico's son, Ruggero (three other sons are doubtful) was made Podestà of Florence, then entirely in the hands of the Neri, very soon after the affair of Lastra, and he fought subsequently for the Guelfs, partly under King Robert, partly in the service of the Florentine commonwealth, though with small success, against Uguccione della Faggiola, Castruccio Castracani, and Guido Tarlati. Robert had taken some of the ancient family feoffs of the Guidi from the Ghibelline members of the family, and handed them over to Robert, whence arose a sanguinary feud during the twenties.

Early in the year 1300 Ruggero had a considerable portion of the family possessions, especially in Romagna, conveyed to him, and was released from the parental control; nor has Salvatico's name been found in any document later than 1299. We need not assume that Boccaccio confused father and son, but it is not improbable, under the circumstances, that the poet may have paid passing visits to Ruggero also, though there is, as far as I know, no evidence for the 'friendship' which Passerini[1] assumes. The description of S. Benedetto all'Alpe,[2] which was then in Ruggero's possession, certainly gives the impression of coming from one personally acquainted with the spot.[3]

Postscript to pp. 193-196.—Dr. Wüstenfeld has been kind enough to point out to me that in Bonaini's *Acta*

[1] Table XIX.

[2] *Inf.* xvi. 100.

[3] Troya, who always supposes, when Dante describes, or even mentions, a place, that he had been staying in it a short time before he wrote the words, bases the chronology of the poem on this idea, and concludes, from the description of S. Benedetto, that canto xvi. of the *Inferno* was written about 1304 (*Veltro alleg. di D.*, pp. 73, 74).—It is more than fifty years since I first pronounced against this theory (*Antologia*, 1826, *Settembre*, p. 56; *Dante-Forschungen*, i. 433 [not translated in this volume.—ED.]), and I have not yet reconciled myself with it. For the reasons given in the first volume of these Studies (pp. 134-138) [Essay XII. of the present volume], I consider that in this case it antedates the composition of the middle portion of the *Inferno* by about ten years.

Henrici VII. Romanorum Imperatoris, i. 226-230, published last year by Berti, the diploma referred to above, p. 194, is given in full, and entirely settles the question of the descendants of Guido, son of the first Aghinolfo.

The deed of June 7th, 1312, states that it is a renewal of the enfeoffment of Guido by the Emperor Frederick II., in April 1247 (cf. above, p. 183), the contents of which it recites, and which refers back again to an older document granting certain privileges to Aghinolfo I., the father of Guido, and to his brothers, who are named in the following order: Guido, Tegrimus, Rogerius, and Merchoaldus (cf. above, p. 174).

Now Henry VII.'s diploma describes the receiver as 'Aghinolfo da Romena, Count Palatine in Tuscany,' and his father Guido, to whom Frederick's enfeoffment was addressed, as 'son of the late Aghinolfo da Romena,' and this relationship between Frederick's vassal Guido (father of the Aghinolfo to whom Henry's diploma is issued) and the elder Aghinolfo (son of Guidoguerra and Gualdrada) is repeatedly attested by Frederick's diploma also.

Now this documentary evidence is quite irreconcilable with Troya's genealogy, while it agrees exactly with the data quoted above, p. 194, from a Privilegium of Charles IV. dated 1355. It is true that Troya gives us an Aghinolfo da Romena (B. 1) whose father is named Guido, and his grandfather Aghinolfo. But since Troya kills him off before 1300 he cannot have received feoffs in 1312. Troya's other Aghinolfo (B. 2) has a father, Guido, indeed, but his grandfather is a Guido too, not an Aghinolfo, as the documents attest.

VIII.—RECENTLY DISCOVERED LETTERS OF DANTE ALLIGHIERI

Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung, Nos. 149-151. 1838.
[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i. pp. 473-487 (1869).]

THE great scarcity of information as to the circumstances of Dante's life is keenly felt by the Commentator as depriving him of one of the most important aids to the comprehension of the poet's works. This want is chiefly attributable to the remarkable fact that Dante's correspondence, which, according to his early biographers, was extensive and important, is for the most part lost. Fifty years ago the dedication of the *Paradiso* to Can Grande della Scala was the one solitary letter we possessed from his hand; and even that, to say nothing of its authenticity having recently been called in question more than once, deserves to be called a preface rather than a letter. Then Dionisi published the short but highly characteristic letter, in which, with a noble dignity, Dante rejects the offered permission to return from banishment under the dishonourable conditions proposed to him. Beyond this we had only later translations—presumably emanating from Marsilio Ficino—of two letters; in one of which Dante invites the Princes and Free States of Italy to show themselves docile, united, and peace-loving to Henry VII. on his expedition to Rome; while in the other he exhorts the Emperor himself to leave Lombardy, whose intrigues and struggles are losing him a precious year, and to descend on Tuscany and attack the rebellious Guelf faction at the fountain-head, in Florence.

Some ten years ago I edited a collection of Dante's letters (limited to sixty presentation copies), and was fortunate enough to be able to include in it the following letters that had not previously been printed. First, the original of the letter to Henry VII.; second, a missive to the Italian Cardinals in conclave at Carpentras, dwelling on the corruption of the clergy, and urging the restoration of the Papal See to Rome; and third, a letter to Cino of Pistoja, in answer to a love-problem which he had propounded to Dante. Since then I have constantly been on the watch for every trace of similar salvage, and at last the zealous assistance of friends at a distance[1] has enabled me to follow up one of the tracks to a treasure above all expectation. A short preliminary account of it will, I think, be of some interest to a wider circle than that of specialists.

Among the MSS. which Maximilian of Bavaria presented in 1622 to Gregory XV., as a part of the Heidelberg booty, is one marked No. 1729, a parchment, in 4to, which it seems was written in Perugia, in the summer of 1394, by one Francesco da Monte Pulciano. It contains the twelve Eclogues of Petrarch, Dante's well-known *De Monarchia* (MSS. of which are rare), and a collection of nine letters, only one of which (the letter to Henry VII. which I had already published) has hitherto been printed. Even for this the MS. gives a considerable number of improved readings. A second letter (that to the Princes of Italy) was only known through the translation mentioned above, and here it is at last in the original. The remaining seven were previously entirely unknown. Three are definitely ascribed to the poet by the old MS., the other four seem, both from their position and contents, to be written by him also, though not in his own name. We may say then that this one discovery has about doubled our previous store.

[1] Dr. Th. Heyse is the friend referred to. See *Dante-Forsch.*, i. 508. —ED.

The eighth letter of the MS. collection, but the first if we take them in chronological order, is addressed to Cardinal Nicolaus of Ostia (of the Albertini of Prato) in the name of the leader (Alessandro da Romena), the council, and the whole body (*capitaneus, consilium et universitas*) of the banished Bianchi of Florence; Dante himself, as is known, being one of the body of twelve which formed the *comitium*. This was the Cardinal sent at the beginning of 1304 by Pope Benedict IX. (who had only been raised to the Papal See on October 22nd, 1303) to establish peace between the Guelfs and Ghibellines, the Bianchi and Neri, and the other political parties which under one name or another divided almost every one of the cities in Tuscany, the Maremma, and Romagna. He entered Florence on March 10th, and rapidly succeeded in winning almost unlimited confidence. Soon, however, a report was circulated, strengthened presumably by forged letters, that he favoured the banished Bianchi to the detriment of the Neri who had remained in possession; and having allowed himself to be induced to make a journey to Pistoja on May 8th, he was unable to regain admission into Florence. The present letter, written presumably in the course of March 1304, and from the Upper Arno valley, whither the majority of the exiles had withdrawn, would certainly lead us to imagine that the charge brought against the Pacificator by the Neri was not altogether without foundation. It appears from our letter that the Cardinal opened proceedings by sending a certain Friar L. to the banished Bianchi, promising them by letter complete restitution of their former rights and the re-organisation of the city in a sense acceptable to them. In return they are unable to find words adequate to express their gratitude, and they declare that they only desire such measure of humiliation for their adversaries as may be needed for the true welfare of their city ('to bring back our adversaries to the furrows of sound citizenship').

They also promise, as the Cardinal demands, to refrain from all acts of enmity against the Neri, and to leave the final conditions of peace entirely in his hands. The letter concludes:

'Wherefore with filial voice we right lovingly implore your most clement tenderness to strive to bedew with the repose of tranquillity and sleep that long-troubled Florence; and as a tender father to regard us, who have ever watched over her people, and all who are allied with us, as commended to you; and like as we have never departed from the love of our Fatherland, so it is our intent never to transgress the limits of your precepts, but ever to obey all soever your commands, both duly and devoutly.'

The second letter is written to condole with Oberto and Guido, Counts of Romena, on the death of their father's brother, Alessandro, the captain of the Bianchi just mentioned. Troya (*Veltro alleg.*, p. 96) believes Alessandro to have been still living at the close of 1308.[1] But on the occasion of Henry VII.'s journey to Rome in 1311 the other Conti Guidi, his kinsmen, are named, but not he. This letter then dates from the period between 1308 and 1311, the time when Dante's fortunes were at the lowest, during which presumably the *Convivio* and the work *De Vulgari Eloquentia* were written. With reference to the poet's relations with the deceased, of which we have hitherto known as good as nothing, we note the following passages:

'The illustrious Count, Alexander, your uncle, who within these few days has returned to the celestial fatherland, whence, after the spirit, we had come, was my liege; and to his memory, so long as I shall live in time, I shall bear allegiance; for his munificence, which is now abundantly recompensed with fit rewards beyond the stars, spontaneously made me his client long years ago. . . . Let then the greatest of the Tuscan families, of which he was so great an ornament, mourn; let all his friends and clients, whose hopes death hath so cruelly chastised, mourn; and, amongst these last, wretched I must mourn indeed, for when, banished from my fatherland in unjust exile, I fell a-pondering on

[1] Cf. above, p. 186, for Troya's later opinion.—Ed.

my misfortunes, I was wont straightway to console myself with dear hope in him. . . . Wherefore, my most dear lieges, I implore you with suppliant exhortation that ye strive to mourn only in due measure, and to put the things of the sense behind, save in so far as they may be examples to you; and even as he most justly made you, as nearest unto himself, the heirs of his possessions, so do ye clothe yourselves with his most noble character also. And on my own part I have, beside all this, to excuse myself to your discretion for my absence from the tearful obsequies; for neither negligence nor ingratitude, but the unlooked-for poverty which my exile hath brought upon me, is the cause of this. For she, like a fierce and persecuting foe, came upon me, horseless and unarmed, and thrust me into the dungeon of her captivity, wherein, though I struggle with all my might to escape, she doth pitilessly scheme to hold me, and hath till now prevailed.'

Now in addition to the lively interest that this letter awakens on its own account, it throws considerable light on the question of the date of the *Divine Comedy*. The date of the publication of the *Inferno* has been generally assumed as about 1308, and the alternative view, that Dante did not make the first part of his poem known till about the year 1314, has found very few adherents. Dionisi first defended it, and I attempted to establish it in the *Parnasso Italiano* [see Essay XII. of this volume]; but to the best of my knowledge the only other supporter it has met with is Blanc, whose name however is a weighty one.[1] But now, surely, we must feel the absolute impossibility of Dante's writing to the Conti Guidi, in this manner, of their uncle, at the very time when he was assigning their place in Hell to him and two of his brothers (xxx. 77) as false coiners; whereas when we reflect how ill these Counts realised Dante's hopes, what double-dealing they showed, in spite of all their hypocritical professions towards Dante's hero, Henry VII., in 1311 and 1312, and how they were sometimes openly at enmity with him, we can understand how the poet, writing about the year 1314, might wield

[1] It is now very widely accepted.—ED.

his lash against the man whom he had so lately belauded. And to these grounds for assigning the completion of the *Inferno* to as late a date as 1314, yet another may be added which I had formerly failed to note. How could Dante speak with such hatred of Clement v. (xix. 82), at the time when there was still a good understanding between this Pope, who was in fact regarded as a Ghibelline, and the poet's party, especially the Emperor himself? It would have been impossible for Dante to write of the visible head of the Church in such terms if the relations were still existing which underlie the letter to the Princes of Italy, now before us in the original. Therein he says, speaking of the Emperor, at the close of 1310, 'On whom Clement, now the successor of Peter, throws the light of the Apostolic blessing.'

The *third* letter, to the Marquis Maroello Malaspina, cannot have been written much later than the second. The poet speaks of Malaspina as his master, and himself as the latter's bondman. Quite independently of the rest of the contents, it is of the greatest interest to find Dante writing in such a fashion to Maroello Malaspina. At the beginning of the fourteenth century there were several like-named members of the Malaspina family; but from all we know of the circumstances of their lives, it seems hardly questionable that the one here addressed was the most renowned of them all, namely, the Marchese di Giovagallo, son of Manfredi Lancia, grandson of Currado l'Antico (*Purg.* viii. 119), and husband of Alagia de' Fieschi (*Purg.* xix. 142). Now, according to Boccaccio (*Life of Dante* and *Commentary to the Inferno*), Benvenuto da Imola, and Filippo Villani, Dante took refuge with this Maroello at a comparatively early stage of his exile, and it was there that he received from friends who had remained behind in Florence the first few cantos of the *Divine Comedy*, which he had begun in that city but had himself

almost forgotten since. This would be about 1307. It was Maroello, according to this account, who prevailed upon his guest to continue the work he had begun; and the poet in gratitude dedicated the *Purgatorio* to him. Now we have a treaty of peace between the Bishop of Luna and several of the Malaspini, dated October 6th, 1306, in which Dante is the representative of Franceschino of Mulazzo, son of one of our Maroello's uncles, and Maroello and Corradino of Villafranca, grandsons of his other uncle. This shows that Dante was even then living in the valley of the Magra, and a friend of the family of Malaspina. A passage of the *Purgatorio* (viii. 133) bears further witness to the existence of intimate relations between Dante and the family at about that time. But it has been justly observed that we cannot possibly think of Count Maroello of Giovagallo as Dante's host in 1307, for he had been for years at the head of the party opposed to the poet, and had dealt a crushing blow to the Bianchi at Serravalle in 1302 (*Inf.* xxiv. 148). It was he too who won Pistoja, the last Ghibelline city in Tuscany, after a memorable siege in which the inhabitants were reduced to the direst straits from starvation. He conquered it for Florence and Lucca, and subsequently governed it as *Capitano del Popolo* in the name of the latter republic until the spring of 1307. Under these circumstances it could hardly have been Maroello, to whose protection Dante commended himself at this season. But things changed during the next year or two. For one thing, Celestine v.'s apparent attitude of mediator had brought the parties nearer together; for another, Dante had lost all hope of the triumph of the Ghibellines; and finally there had been serious misunderstandings between Maroello and the Guelfs of Florence in 1308. All this would make it less surprising to find the poet, who was already on terms of friendship with the family, in a more intimate connection with

their head in the year 1309 or 1310, in spite of previous hostility, especially as about a year later we find the same Maroello highly honoured by Henry himself and sent to Brescia as Imperial Vicar. In similar fashion Dante's last resort was the house of another Guelf, Guido Novello of Polenta.

Now the newly-discovered letter almost startles us by its revelation that this possibility of Dante's having found a refuge with Maroello Malaspina shortly before Henry's expedition to Rome turns out to be a fact. So the reports of the early biographers are not pure inventions, and the modern writers who have held that Dante was only entertained by Franceschino Malaspina of Mulazzo are shown to have been mistaken. Even the story of the cantos of the *Commedia* discovered and sent after the poet may be true in substance, although distorted. Perhaps the papers contained the canzoni subsequently expounded in the *Convivio*. Maybe Dino Frescobaldi, whom Boccaccio mentions, sent them to Franceschino, who was at that time Dante's host, and whom the saga afterwards confused with the more celebrated Maroello. It is even possible that this event really gave the impulse to the elaboration of the *Convivio*. Scolari and Fraticelli (*Opere minori di Dante*, Florence, 1862, iii. pp. 24 *sq.*) have indeed lately maintained that the second and fourth parts of this work were written in 1297, the first and third in 1314; but the untrustworthy nature of their conclusions may be judged by the circumstance that their main argument assumes that Gherardo da Camino (who is mentioned in the fourth book as now dead) did not survive the end of the thirteenth century, whereas as a matter of fact he died on March 26th, 1307 [compare above, p. 92].

But let not this confirmation of the tradition of Dante's relations to Maroello lead any one to accept the story of the dedication of the *Purgatorio*, or the string of inventions

contained in the forged letter of the monk Hilarius, which no competent judge should allow himself to regard as genuine. Maroello's wife, Alagia, appears as a widow as early as 1315, and the *Purgatorio* cannot have been completed before 1318 or 1319.[1]

The letter is comparatively short, but its contents are almost more startling than its superscription. The writer tells of his return to the sources of the Arno—perhaps to Count Guido Salvatico, second cousin of Alessandro mentioned above—and how he often turns longing eyes back on Maroello's court, which he has just left, and where his insusceptibility to female charms had not infrequently been a subject of wonder. But now, he continues, he has seen a lady, the love of whom has so irresistibly overcome him that it has thrust all other thoughts from his breast, and completely transformed him. A canzone further expressing his emotion seems to have accompanied the letter, and we can have no hesitation in identifying it with the one beginning '*Amor dacchè convien pur ch'io mi doglia*' (the tenth in Kannegiesser's and my edition), for the matter of the poem is in striking harmony with this prose picture. Dionisi, therefore, had almost exactly hit the mark with respect to this canzone in dating it about 1311.[2]

But the most remarkable, as well as the longest of the letters (not counting the address to the Princes of Italy, of which we already had a translation), is the fourth. It is dated from the confines of Tuscany, at the sources of the Arno, March 31st, 1311, about the date therefore of Henry VII.'s march upon Cremona and Brescia. It bears

[1] See above, p. 46, note 2.—1869. [The credit of Frate Ilario's letter does not seem likely to be re-established. But since Hauvette has shown (*Mél. d'Arch. et d'Hist.*, 1894, xiv. 87 *sq.*) that the MS. in which it appears is an autograph of Boccaccio's, the whole case requires at least restatement.—ED.]

[2] Cf. above, p. 94 and *Dante's lyr. Gedichte*, ii. 234-239.—1869.

the superscription '*D. Al.*, the Florentine, exiled counter to his deserts, to the most wicked Florentines within,' and is by no means to be confused with the lost letter written a few years before in the tone of a suppliant, of which Leonardo Bruni has preserved the beginning. This letter of ours, however, must also have been known to Bruni, for it can only be in reference to it that he says:

'Now while he was thus hoping for a return by way of pardon, the election of Henry of Luxemburg as Emperor took place; and first his election and then his expedition threw all Italy into a fever of expectation. Whereon Dante could not hold his purpose of awaiting grace, but, exalting himself with disdainful mind, began to revile them who were in possession of the city, calling them infamous and evil, and threatening them with the punishment they deserved at the hands of the Emperor, from which, he said, it was evident that they could have no escape.'

After a short introduction, in which the poet seeks to demonstrate by history and by revelation the necessity of the universal dominion of Rome, now inherited by the German Empire, and speaks of the Pope and the Princes of the Church with less respect than he had shown only a year previously, he continues:

'But you, who transgress law divine and human, whom the dire greed of cupidity hath found ready to be drawn into every crime, doth not the dread of the second death pursue you? Since ye first and alone, rejecting the yoke of liberty, have murmured against the glory of the Roman Prince, the king of the world and the minister of God, and on the plea of prescriptive right have refused the duty of submission which ye owed, and have rather risen up in the insanity of rebellion!'

Further on his reproach of his opponents for an inference that might be drawn from their principles proves at any rate, whatever else we may think of it, how far he was from desiring in any way to injure the unity of the Church.

'Wherefore, then, stirring up so vain a thought as this, do ye, a second race of Babylonians, desert the pious Empire, and

seek to establish new kingdoms, making the civic life of Florence one and that of Rome another? Wherefore should not the like envy attack the Apostolic monarchy, that if Delia [the Empire] be reduplicated in heaven, Delius [the Papacy] should be reduplicated in like fashion?'

The poet's charge that the Florentines have not shrunk from giving voice to their disobedience in a resolution of their own council would seem to refer to the defiant answer to the royal intercession in the Arezzo incident, July 1310 (Villani, viii. 120; Barthold, *Der Römerzug König Heinrichs*, 1830, i. 380). He then continues:

'But if your insolent arrogance hath so bereft you of the dew of the Most High (even as the mountains of Gilboa) that it be no terror to have resisted the counsels of the Eternal senate, nor a terror that ye are not terrified, surely that base terror, human to wit and mundane, cannot be lacking when the inevitable shipwreck of your proudly exalted blood and your right lamentable rapine hastens on! Or do ye trust in any defence, girt by your contemptible vallum? Oh harmonious in ill, oh blinded by wondrous greed, what shall it avail to have girt you with a vallum, and to have fortified you with outworks and battlements when, terrible in gold, that eagle shall swoop down on you who, soaring now over the Pyrenees, now over Caucasus, now over Atlas, ever strengthened by the breathing of the soldiery of heaven, looked down of old upon vast oceans in his flight? Oh most wretched of men! How shall it be with you, when ye stand dumb in the presence of him who shall tame the insane Hesperia? The hope which ye cherish in vain, and against all virtuous use, shall not be furthered by this your resistance; but rather shall such an obstacle make the advent of the just king flame up the more; and mercy, who ever accompanieth his army, shall fly away indignant; and where ye think to see the corridor of false liberty, there shall ye fall into the dungeons of slavery indeed. For we are to believe that by a wondrous judgment of God it doth sometimes come to pass that where the impious man thinketh to escape the punishment he doth deserve, he is hurled therein the more grievously; and he who hath fought, knowing and willing it, against the divine will, must needs wrestle therewith when he knoweth and willeth it not.

'The fortifications which ye reared not in prudence against

necessity, but changed at random and for wantonness, which gird no Pergama risen once again—these ye shall mournfully gaze upon as they fall in ruins before the battering-ram, and are burnt with fire. Ye shall see that populace which now doth rage hither and thither, for and against, then of one mind clamouring dire threats against you, for they may not be hungry and timid at one time. Ye shall look upon the grievous sight of your temples, thronged with the daily concourse of matrons, given up to the spoiler; and of your wondering and unknowing little ones, destined to expiate the sins of their sires. And—if my presaging mind be not deceived, as it announceth that which it hath learned from truth-telling signs, and arguments that may not be gainsaid—your city, worn out with long-drawn sufferings, shall be given at last into the hands of the aliens, the greatest part of you scattered in death and captivity, while the few that are left to endure their exile shall look on and weep. And, briefly to sum up all, what sufferings that glorious city of Saguntum bore in faithfulness, for liberty, those same must ye of force endure shamefully, in perfidy, for slavery.'

The Florentines, continues the poet, are not to look for the unexpected good fortune of the men of Parma when they surprised Vittoria, the military headquarters of Frederick II., but rather let them remember the judgment which fell upon the unhappy Milan at the hands of Barbarossa.

'Nor in your blindness do ye perceive the lust that hath sway over you, lulling you with poisonous whisper, holding you back with scourging threats, making you captive to the law of sin, and forbidding you to obey the sacred laws that copy the image of natural justice; the observance whereof, if it be joyous, if it be free, not only is proved to be no slavery, but to him who looketh in clearness is seen itself to be supreme liberty. For what else is liberty save the free course of the will to act, which the laws make easy for those who submit to them? Since then they alone are free who of their own will obey the law, what are ye to think of yourselves who, whilst ye make parade of the love of liberty, conspire against the universal laws, and against the Prince of the laws?

'Oh most wretched offspring of Fiesole! Oh Punic barbarism once again! Do the things that I have touched on strike too

little terror into you? Nay, I believe that, for all the hope ye simulate in countenance and lying word, ye tremble in your waking hours and ever start from your slumbers shuddering at the omens that have crept into your dreams, or remembering the counsels of the day-time.'

In conclusion Dante warns his hostile fellow-citizens that the time for repentance is past, and the Emperor, once so gracious, has now naught but punishment in store for them.

It was only twenty-nine months later that the bier at Buonconvento gave the mournful answer to the poet's threats!

The three last and shortest letters are not written in Dante's name, but in that of the Countess G. (the MS. only gives the initial) of Battifolle to the Empress Margaretha of Brabant, wife of Henry VII. The last, and evidently latest, is dated from Poppi, in the upper valley of the Arno, May 18th, 1311. The first may have been written in the summer of 1310, when Henry was sending his agents to various parts of Italy to win over the estranged and to encourage the well-disposed. The substance of the letter is confined to ardent expressions of gratitude for the extreme graciousness with which the Empress has imparted news of her own and her royal husband's doings. The second speaks enthusiastically of the sympathetic rejoicing of the writer over the happy course of affairs of which the Empress has informed her (perhaps the events in Asti, November, 1310), and finally the third contains further assurances of the writer's rejoicing in the progress of events, and of her continued attachment, ending with short accounts of the health and circumstances of the writer, her husband, and her children, in reply to the Empress's express inquiries.

Thus we see Margaretha, the loyal companion of the Emperor in the dangers and toils of his expedition, already

beginning to exert herself in her husband's cause from afar, and by a gracious word in season striving to win him support even among the Guelf nobility. The writer of the letter subscribes herself Countess Palatine of Tuscany, a title assumed by all the Conti Guidi of the different lines. Most likely she is the wife of Guido, and mother therefore of the Federigo Novello mentioned in *Purg.* vi. 17. But it seems probable that Dante actually composed the letters, from several words and turns which frequently recur in his Latin works, and from the circumstance that it was just at this time, as we have already pointed out, that he was with the Conti Guidi in the upper valley of the Arno. This however is no reason whatever for assuming, with Troya, that Dante was once held prisoner in the Castle of Porciano.

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IX.—GEMMA DONATI

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 48-86 (1879).]

I. THE ORIGIN OF THIS ESSAY

In the first issue of the *Rivista internazionale*, *Britannica*, *etc.*, I published a short article entitled 'A Question as to Gemma Donati.' My illustrious friend Dr. Scartazzini, whose signal services to the study of Dante need no testimonial from me, was moved to contribute an answer characterised by a courtesy too often absent in literary discussions. I replied, and my learned opponent maintained his opinion in a second article. I gladly recognise the force of many of the arguments he brought to bear upon my doubts, but I cannot consider myself vanquished, and I have thought well to gather together in the following pages the arguments urged on either side, sometimes repeating word for word what I wrote in the articles in question, sometimes explaining and recasting them, or omitting what I now feel to be of less importance.

II. BOCCACCIO'S LIFE OF DANTE

Every one knows that Boccaccio, in his Life of Dante, speaks with but scant favour of the poet's wife, and that Giannozzo Manetti gives her a still worse character. The supreme reverence which we all feel for our great hero, and which we would so gladly extend to everything pertaining to him, has induced the greater number of the biographers of our poet, at any rate in modern times, to discredit Boccaccio's record. They stigmatise him as a mere gossip,

who, in Leonardo Bruni Aretino's words, 'drops the weighty and substantial parts of Dante's life, passing them over in silence,' while he taxes his invention to devise stories fit for a 'place in those ten amorous *Days* wherein enamoured ladies and gallant youths recounted the hundred tales.'

This severe judgment, repeated by innumerable subsequent writers, has been justly challenged by Baldelli, Gamba, and not a few more, amongst whom I need only mention that most accurate scholar Paur, and Boccaccio's latest biographer, Marco Landau.

III. TWO CLASSES OF STATEMENT IN BOCCACCIO

If I am not mistaken, we must distinguish between two elements, of widely diverse character, in the biography in question. On the one side there are the long ramblings, or the passionate discourses, in which Messer Giovanni delights to display his eloquence. And to these we may add the miraculous inventions and prophetic dreams. On the other side stand positive facts related on the faith of persons in a position to know the truth. We may quite well refuse to assign any importance whatever to the mythical tales, and at the same time place perfect confidence in the facts. As Gamba well observes: 'Readers whose taste is repelled by the style of the early writings cannot reconcile themselves to the constant apostrophes and exclamations, or the perpetual digressions that draw them away from the subject-matter. But books must be read with a mind always conscious of the age in which they were written.' And it was quite in harmony with the taste of Boccaccio's time to clothe known historical facts in miraculous garb. Even Livy, 'who errs not,' tells us of many events which, since the day of Giambatista Vico, have ceased to be believed as facts, and yet we have perfect confidence in his account of the second Punic War.

Giov. Villani tells of King Attalante, of Dardanus, and the three Priams, as though he had been personally acquainted with them; but while we have no hesitation in setting down these stories as mediæval fables we accept as perfectly authentic all that the same writer tells us of Giano della Bella and the ordinances of Justice, of Charles of Valois, or of Walter, Duke of Athens.

IV. BOCCACCIO'S CHRONOLOGICAL MISTAKES

Very similar considerations apply to the dates which we find in Boccaccio's work. If the day of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, A.D. 1321, is specified as the date of the poet's death at Ravenna, we do not hesitate to accept it without reservation, for we know that thirty years later the author passed some time at Ravenna, and was in communication with several persons who had been closely united to Dante by ties of blood or friendship. Moreover, he had the opportunity of verifying the date by inspecting the sepulchral stone. But if Boccaccio declares that the *Monarchia* was composed by Dante 'on the coming of the Emperor Henry VII.,' and that the composition of the little book *De Vulgari Eloquentia* was begun by the author hard upon his death, and was thereby interrupted, we shall at once ask how the biographer can have obtained this information. Precise dates, giving the year and day of composition, are not customary in manuscripts; and though we cannot actually say that it is impossible that Dante may have told his daughter Beatrice or Pier Giardino when and why he set himself to write these works, yet such confidences seem far from characteristic of Allighieri. It will therefore be natural to conclude that when Boccaccio assigned these dates, he was reduced, just as we are, to conjectures founded on internal evidence. It is true that he positively affirms 'nella venuta di Arrigo VII. . . . fece

uno libro . . . il cui titolo è *Monarchia*,' 'già vicino alla sua morte compose uno libretto . . . il quale egli intitolò *De Vulgari Eloquentia*,' and not 'Henry VII.'s expedition is supposed to have given Dante the impulse to compose his three books *de Monarchia*,' etc. But do not we, in this hypercritical age, still say, 'Virgil composed his second Eclogue in 45 B.C. or a little earlier,' although this date, which we give as a positive fact, is merely founded upon certain combinations based on the events alluded to in the poem? Now suppose fresh critical researches should induce the learned world to change the date, would it not be quite unfair to refuse all credence to our statement of facts within our knowledge, because, following the general belief, we had spoken of the date positively? For instance, it would be most unjust to denounce as unworthy of confidence a historian who, some twenty years ago, should have referred to an event vouched for by the supposed Ricordano Malespini as indubitable history.

V. FICTIONS AS ADORNMENT OF FACTS

One more reservation must be made as to Boccaccio's veracity. A fact which he relates may be perfectly true in substance, but those who told it him may have already embellished it, or he himself, yielding to his story-telling habit, may have consciously adorned it. Not unfrequently we find this nucleus of fact swathed, as it were, in wrappings which quite frankly proclaim themselves to be fictitious.

VI. THE RECOVERY OF THE FIRST SEVEN CANTOS OF THE DIVINE COMEDY

For example we need not hesitate to accept as genuine the fact related by Boccaccio twice over,[1] that either

[1] In his *Vita di Dante*, Milanesi's edition, 59 *sq.*, and his Commentary on *Inf.* viii. 1, in vol. ii. pp. 129 *sq.* of the same edition.

Andrea di Leon Poggi, son of Dante's sister, or Dino Perini, while searching in the exiled poet's desks to discover certain documents in support of Gemma's claims with regard to her dowry, discovered some poems which Dante had written before he was exiled. Nor have we any reason to doubt that Dino Frescobaldi, to whom Andrea showed the papers, marvelling 'both at the beautiful and polished and ornate style of speech, and at the depth of meaning which he seemed to see hidden under the fair crust,' despatched them to the Marchese Maruello Malaspina, in whose house the author was staying at the time. And it is not at all unlikely that the latter, rejoicing in the rediscovery of the works which he had supposed to be lost, occupied himself with them afresh in one way or another. But we have good reason for not believing that the poems contained in these papers were really the first seven cantos in the *Inferno*, and for rejecting the hypothesis that the record of this fact is to be found in the poet's note at the beginning of the eighth canto, 'I say, continuing,' etc.

If, as we may suppose, the poems discovered in the desk were some, or all, of the Canzoni which Dante had determined to annotate, then we can perfectly well understand that, after the *Comedy* was published and had secured such an enormous reputation, any person who had had a hand in discovering these papers might forget, after the lapse of years, whether what he had read was Terza Rima or Canzoni, and might endeavour to get some credit for the completion of the Divine Poem. And in truth Andrea Poggi and Dino Perini claimed the same identical share in the discovery; and Messer Giovanni, not knowing which to believe, concludes by saying, 'Now how this thing happened or may have happened I leave to the judgment of my readers. Let each one believe what he thinks true or most likely.'

For the rest it must be admitted that in this matter

Boccaccio is far from showing the want of critical acumen so often attributed to him; for after telling us in the Commentary all that Andrea Poggi on the one side and Dino Perini on the other had related to him, he produces an excellent argument for believing that the first cantos of the Inferno can *not* have been composed before the exile of the poet, and discovered again in 1307 or thereabouts.

VII. THE LAST THIRTEEN CANTOS

Another example is furnished by the story of the concluding cantos of the *Paradiso*. If the *Purgatorio* cannot have been published earlier than the end of 1318 or the beginning of 1319[1] we may well believe that the two years, or little more, of the poet's life which still remained, must have been devoted almost entirely to the accomplishment of the last and most arduous part of his work. Nor do I see any reason for refusing credence to the story of the thirteen cantos sought in vain for eight months, and at last discovered beneath a mat nailed to the wall of the poet's chamber. As Boccaccio assures us[2] the story was told him by a worthy man of Ravenna, whose name was Piero Giardino, 'long time a disciple of Dante's.' But he adds miraculous circumstances which we do not hesitate to pronounce fabulous. One night, hard upon morning, his father's shade appeared to Jacopo, Dante's son, and showed him in a dream where the concluding cantos of the work were concealed. Pier Giardino, to whom Jacopo came to tell his dream, went with him that very night before break of day to the house in which Dante had lived till the time of his death, and found the mat as indicated in the dream, though no one had noticed it before, and there at once they discovered the papers behind it, already moulded by the damp, and all but rotting.

[1] See Essay XII. in this volume.

[2] *Vita*, pp. 62 *sq.*

Here, too, it is more than doubtful whether Boccaccio invented this dream. He tells it indeed; but it is on the authority of Giardino and of the poet's own son. I know not whether Pier Giardino was still living when Boccaccio composed this biography (that is to say, according to the Conte Baldelli,[1] in 1351, but perhaps more probably in 1354[2]), but we know that Jacopo did not die much before 1360, and therefore he would have had plenty of time to disclaim a story wrongly foisted upon him. Let us note, moreover, that dreams and visions were quite after the fashion of the age. As many as seven visions are recorded in our poet's *Vita Nuova*. There are three in the *Purgatorio*. The *Paradiso* relates the dream of St. Dominic's mother as a historical fact, and the author himself calls the sacred poem a vision.[3]

VIII. DID BOCCACCIO INTEND THE 'VITA' FOR HISTORY OR ROMANCE?

After indicating the many portions of the *Vita di Dante* which can make no pretension to historical truth, let us ask whether Boccaccio took the *rôle* of historian in the remainder of his work; and if he did whether he was in a position to give us authentic details.

Scartazzini[4] does not hesitate to answer the question in the negative. It was not Boccaccio's purpose, he says, to ascertain historical truth, or, in other words, to write Allighieri's history. He then continues: 'I have said, and I repeat, that Boccaccio wrote a poem or romance, whichever you like, and not a history.' In proof of this he adduces a blunder as to the date of Pope Urban IV.'s death,

[1] *Vita di Giov. Boccacci*, pp. 378, 379.
[2] Marc. Landau, *Giov. Boccaccio, sein Leben und seine Werke* (Stuttg. 1877), p. 180.
[3] *Par.* xvii. 128.
[4] *Rivista internazionale*, p. 170.

and certain inaccuracies or mistakes relating to the events of Dante's life or relative to his works.

IX. THE GHIBELLINE FANATICISM ATTRIBUTED TO DANTE

As the most marked examples of these mistakes the learned author quotes the following passage:[1] 'In Romagna it is matter of greatest notoriety that any feeble woman or little child who had but spoken in condemnation of the Ghibelline faction would have stirred him to such madness as to move him to hurl stones at such had they not held their peace; and with such passion he lived even until his death.'

Let us note, however, that in this passage Boccaccio does not profess to report a fact that had actually occurred, but simply repeats a popular opinion concerning Dante, to wit that he was so hot a Ghibelline that he would have been capable of hurling stones, etc. Now we can easily understand that in a thoroughly Guelf city, such as Ravenna at that time was, Dante might have been considered a fanatical Ghibelline. He was considered so when he lived, and the reputation has lasted to our own day. If an examination of his works now convinces us that, in spite of all the Guelf hatred which he had to endure, Dante was far removed from any Ghibelline fanaticism, this is no ground for denouncing as a romancer the author who repeats the current judgment of the people of Romagna, which for that matter was quite in accord with the belief concerning Dante current in Florence itself. The like confusions and errors are not unknown even in our own time, in spite of all the printed books which make the verification of facts, in the majority of instances, so easy a matter. Any one who made such mistakes in our day would incur the charge

[1] *Vita di Dante*, p. 56.

of inaccuracy, but no one would suppose that it was his deliberate intention to compose a romance and not an historical work.

X. SOURCES OF THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN BY BOCCACCIO

Let us now ask whether Boccaccio was in a position to ascertain the truth as to the events of Dante's life.

No one would assert that laborious researches in the archives or the deciphering of half-obliterated letters was at all in Boccaccio's line. But thirty years after the poet's death tradition must still have preserved a number of anecdotes and facts concerning him. In the middle of the century the number of persons who had known him during his life, or had been in relations with his nearest relatives, must have been considerable.

And in fact Boccaccio himself assures us[1] that he was acquainted with Andrea Poggi, 'who was wonderfully like Dante in his features, and also in his stature and person; and stooped a little, as they say Dante did. He was a man of no learning, but of good natural capacity, and was orderly and pleasing in his discourse and character.' He adds, that having formed Andrea's acquaintance he often heard him discourse of the character and ways of Dante, and it was a satisfaction to him to have preserved, in his memory, at least the greater part of what he said.

Another acquaintance of Boccaccio's who was in a position to have full knowledge of the events of Dante's life was Dino Perini, a Florentine citizen and 'a man of intelligence, and, according to his own account, as intimate and friendly with Dante as could be.'[2]

The third acquaintance of Dante's known to our biographer was 'that worthy Ravennese whose name was Piero Giardino, long time a disciple of Dante's.'[3]

[1] Commentary on *Inf.* viii., vol. ii., p. 129. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 132.
[3] *Vita*, p. 62.

Besides these three, Boccaccio had access to a fourth source of information, which was perhaps the most important of them all. I mean Sister Beatrice, a nun of the Monastery of S. Stephano at Ravenna, to whom, in the name of the Company of Or' San Michele, Messer Giovanni conveyed a present of ten gold florins in 1350.[1] This second daughter of the poet, to whom he had given the name of the only woman he had ever really loved, had been with him during the last period of his life; and we may suppose that with her, the last member of his family who was near to him, he may have conversed without reserve as to the vicissitudes of his life. It is not a bad idea of Baldelli's[2] that this journey to Ravenna may have given Boccaccio the impulse to compile his Life of Dante; and to my thinking the tears and the reminiscences of the exile's daughter would be more conducive to this result than the inspection of his tomb.

We therefore know the names of four persons, relatives or friends of Dante's, known and consulted by his biographer; and it is likely enough that there were many more not specially named by him, who supplied him with materials that deserve the utmost confidence.

For all these reasons I am far from sharing the severe judgment of Scartazzini and not a few others, and am completely at one with Baldelli when he says: 'The work which preserves so many important details concerning Allighieri, in which he is depicted with the hand of a master, in which he is so eloquently extolled by so great a contemporary, is a precious jewel of Italian literature, which confers no less glory on its author than on its subject.'[3]

[1] Fraticelli, *Storia della vita di Dante*, pp. 301, 302.

[2] *Ub. sup.*

[3] P. 105: Dr. Marco Landau, the latest biographer of Boccaccio, whose judgment deserves the highest respect, is in complete agreement with Baldelli. He says, on p. 180: 'This earliest biography of Dante

XI. THE FIRST PASSAGE. DANTE'S MARRIAGE WITH GEMMA DONATI

Let us now examine the passages in which Boccaccio speaks of Gemma. When we look closely we find that there are only two that are unquestionable, and one that may be fairly challenged.

In the first passage, after speaking of Beatrice's death and of the despairing grief of the poet, his tears, and sighs, which nevertheless in progress of time 'began in great part to go their way without return,' the author continues:[1]

'When his relatives saw that his tears were somewhat eased, and were aware that his hot sighs were giving some little respite to his travailed bosom, they began once again to ply the forlorn one with the consolations[2] that had so long been lost on him, and he, though up to that hour he had obstinately closed his ears against them, now began not only to open them somewhat, but to listen gladly to what might be said with respect to his comforting; which thing his relatives perceiving, in hope not only to draw him altogether out of his sorrows, but also to bring him into

is the fairest monument that Boccaccio could have raised, whether to himself or to the poet he reverenced so highly, though many modern historians of literature would deny the work all merit. It is true enough that Boccaccio entered upon no laborious investigations . . . as to the place in which Dante spent each day of his life. He did not write page after page, as many a modern pedant of a biographer might, on the question of whether such and such an event of his hero's life took place on the eleventh or twelfth of a given month. But he has painted Dante for us as he really was. With a firm hand he has so drawn him that we seem to see and to hear him. Not a touch is wanting that would help us to a knowledge of his character. He has compiled his biography from his recollections and from oral tradition, and has not cunningly extracted it from Dante's works; but if we compare Dante as he reveals himself to us in his works with Dante as he meets us almost as a living man in Boccaccio's biography, we see that not a touch is wanting. We see before us the haughty statesman, conscious of his worth, and equally severe in his demands on himself and on others, the devout theologian, the ardent worshipper of Beatrice,—in a word, the poet of the *Divine Comedy*.'

[1] *Vita*, pp. 14, 15.

[2] Others, MSS., read (with the *editio princeps* [?] of 1477), 'to reconsole the disconsolate one.'

gladness, took counsel together to purpose giving him a wife, in order that like as his lost lady had been the cause of his sadness so might the newly gained one be of gladness. And having found a damsel who was meet for his condition, with such discourse as they deemed most suasive they opened their intent to him. And, not to touch on each point in particular, after long conflict, and not without the lapse of a long space of time between, their discourses brought the effect to pass and he was married.'

And a page further on:

'His relatives and friends gave Dante a wife that his tears for Beatrice might have an end; but I know not whether for this (though the tears passed away, or rather, perhaps, had already passed), the amorous flame, departed; yet I do not think it. But, even granted that it were quenched, many fresh burdens, yet more grievous, might take its place.'[1]

XII. SECOND PASSAGE. SEPARATION BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

After having dealt with great prolixity on all the unpleasant experiences which marriage might bring upon Dante, he ends the discourse with the following passage, which we have spoken of as the second:

'Assuredly I do not affirm that these things chanced to Dante; for I do not know it; though true it is, that whether such like things or others were the cause, when once he had parted

[1] The passage occurs in a much contracted form in the other biography, also attributed to Boccaccio, which is found in a considerable number of MSS., and was printed by Mussi in his splendid edition of the *Divine Comedy* (Milan, 1809, fol.). [Cf. p. 280 of this volume.] 'To this thorn [his amours with Pargoletta and the Alpine lady] was added another, perhaps as sharp; for when the assuaging of his tears for Beatrice's death gave his friends some hopes for his life, it at once came into the heads of his friends that if they gave him a maiden to wife, she, who though departed from this world, had left her image in his breast in perpetual supremacy, might be wholly cast out therefrom. And he being disposed thereto, they gave instant effect to their design. There may be some who will approve of this plan; and this because they do not reflect upon the danger that lies in quenching a temporal fire by an eternal one.'

from her (who was given him as a consolation in his sufferings!) never would he go where she was, nor would he suffer her to come to where he was, albeit he was the father of certain children by her.'

There is less reserve in the expressions of the abbreviated life:

'. . . What shall I say if jealousy intervenes? What if anger deepens at last into hatred? I hasten over this matter, for it will suffice for the wise if I only touch upon it. But, whatever others may be (to return at last to the matter in hand), such at least was the one who had been given to Dante, that when once he was parted from her he never would return to where she was, nor would have her come where he was.'

The authority we are to assign to this compendium will be considered in a short article which may be regarded as supplementary to the present essay; for the rest, even these words do not accuse Gemma of the disagreeable qualities before enumerated as customary in wives, but only say that whatever the cause may have been, she was such that when Dante was separated from her by exile or some other circumstance he never wished to meet her again.

XIII. DEDUCTIONS FROM THESE TWO PASSAGES

1. *Dante's marriage not a love-match.*

For two things, then, we may say the biographer vouches. First, that it was not love but the counsels of his relatives that led Allighieri to marry Gemma; and, secondly, that when once they were separated they never met again.

I grant that a *mariage de convenance* may turn out happily, or at any rate may be free from domestic altercations; but there is certainly less prospect of this than in the case of a union between two persons already bound together by true love. And Dante's marriage was a more risky matter than a similar union would have been in many

other cases. His love for Beatrice, who 'held the citadel of his mind till his last breath,' was unexhausted, and this was an ill augury for his marriage; for such a love could scarcely fail in course of time to cause increasing jealousy on the part of his wife. A still further danger to the harmony of the pair was the relation of his wife to the Donati, who stood at the head of the party opposed to Dante from the opening of the new century onwards. Let us listen to the words of Cesare Balbo, who for that matter is one of Gemma's champions. After speaking of the haughty manners of Corso Donati and of his enmity to Messer Vieri de' Cerchi and Guido Cavalcanti, he goes on:[1]

'Add the indignation which rises of itself in a noble heart at the sight of outrages, even if it is not personally affected by them, and we shall understand that Dante's marriage with Gemma Donati would draw him into a hornets' nest of irritation and hostility, in which Gemma may have had no part, but which would not tend to endear her to him. All this as a general proposition appears to me practically certain.'

Let us add to Balbo's very just remarks, that as their family increased, Gemma would naturally expect her husband to turn all his thoughts to the wise administration of the common stock (rather scanty than otherwise), to turn it to the best account, and, unless of an exceptionally exalted disposition, would surely be vexed with him for neglecting all this and giving himself up to frequenting 'the schools of the religious orders and the disputations of philosophers,' composing 'moral odes,' and sitting up all night long studying the works of Aquinas and Albertus Magnus.

That our poet's resources were in truth restricted we may see from authentic documents which, as far as I have noted, have not been taken into consideration by Dante's

[1] *Vita di Dante*, i. cap. 8, near the end.

most recent biographers. One of these documents shows us that as early as April 11th, 1293, the brothers Dante and Francesco d' Alaghiero Alaghieri borrowed from Andrea di Guido de' Ricci 277½ florins, full Florentine weight, equal to about 11,100 French francs.[1] On the 23rd December of the same year the same brothers Allighieri contracted another debt of 480 golden florins (that is to say, more than 19,000 francs), from Giacomo Lotti de' Corbizi, and from Pannochia Riccomanni. Another 90 florins (3600 francs) Dante borrowed from his brother Francesco, on the 14th of March 1299 (Florentine style, equivalent to 1300 in the usual style). If we add the small debts of 50, 20, and 13 florins, of which there is documentary evidence, contracted between 1297 and 1300, we reach a total of more than 37,000 francs; an immense sum for those times.[2]

To release himself from debts of such an amount would surely have been a matter of the greatest difficulty if not impossibility to Dante, even had he not been exiled. We see from the will of Maria Donati, Gemma's mother,[3] that in February 1314 (= 1315) the 480 and the 90 florins had not yet been paid. Finally, the poet's sons cleared off the debt, or at least the greater part of it, in 1332 by the sale of their father's villa of Camerlata under Fiesole.[4]

These debts would be all the more annoying to Gemma, because her own father, Manetto Donati, had gone bail for the heaviest of them.

In all this we have not a word to say against Gemma, but it must be confessed that the alliance was not a very propitious one.

Scartazzini urges that even if there had really been any

[1] The florins are reduced to francs after the scale given by the Tuscan economists.—Peruzzi, *Storia del commercio e de' banchieri di Fir.*, 1868, i. 121.

[2] Gargani, *della casa di Dante*, pp. 38-40.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42.

[4] Passerini, *Curiosità storico-artistiche Fiorentine*, ii. 15, 16.

want of affection between husband and wife, Gemma would not have spoken of it to Beatrice or to Andrea Poggi, nor the poet himself to Pier Giardino, for both of them would have been anxious to throw a veil over the fact, and therefore none of these persons would have been able to give the biographer authentic information about it. I answer that there was no need of any such information. All Florence knew that the marriage had been made by Dante's relatives, and the Donati, when they saw that it turned out far from happily, would be sure to air their grievances against Dante, for whom they had little tenderness, and throw all possible blame upon him.

XIV. 2. PERMANENT SEPARATION OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

Let us now turn to the other fact, viz. that when once Dante had parted from Gemma he never wished again to go where she was, nor would suffer her to come where he was.—These words might imply that even before his exile he had separated from his wife, or, in other words, had sent her back to her relations, and this is how Manetti (following in the footsteps of Boccaccio, as usual, but exaggerating his statements) seems actually to have understood the passage. He says :[1]

'He had a wife of the illustrious family of the Donati whose name was Gemma. She was a great shrew, even as we read of Xantippe, the wife of the philosopher Socrates. And then . . . there was the added misery of his shrewish wife, who was so far from providing any comfort for his anguish that his greatest torment of all was that which she caused. He tried to bear with his wife's intolerable ways at home for fear of being subject to the random insolence of women abroad, and for a long time he is said to have put up with her folly and perversity. But when at last he could no longer endure her intolerable

[1] In Galletti, *Phil. Villani . . . et de Florentinorum literatura . . . synchroni scriptores* (Flor. 1847), 4to, p. 73.

shamelessness, though he had had several children by her, he departed from her on such terms that henceforth he could hardly endure her presence, as though there had been an actual divorce between them.'

Rightly understood, however, Boccaccio's words simply imply that after being exiled (during his embassy to Boniface VIII.) Dante never came back to Florence to visit his wife, nor consented to meet her elsewhere. Scartazzini answers that this is no wonder, since when exiled he could not have returned to his fatherland however much he had wished it. We might reply that the first condemnation of January 27th, 1302, at any rate, did not threaten the poet's life or liberty, but merely imposed a fine upon him with the confiscation of his goods.[1] Even when exiled we may suppose that many a Florentine found means of secretly introducing himself into Florence for a few days. We may add that Villani assures us[2] that the Donati had possessions in the country near to those of the Cerchi, and no doubt the exile might have found his way to some of these more easily than to the city itself. But we will not insist upon this possibility, and will admit, with our friendly opponent, that Boccaccio's assertion that when once Dante had parted from his wife he never desired to come where she was, amounts to very little so far as the time of his exile is concerned.

But the second half of the passage we have quoted is more significant, namely, that the poet would not have Gemma come where he was. These words, if I rightly judge, imply not only that the wife on her side would have desired to see her husband, but also that whenever there was a possibility of her doing so Dante's irrevocable determination hindered it.

[1] The second decree, however, condemning him to be burned to death if he fell into the power of the Republic, followed in the March of the same year.—ED.

[2] viii. 39.

Are we to say then, with Cesare Balbo[1] and many others, that the fault was not on Gemma's side, but on the poet's? In matrimonial quarrels it is seldom indeed that the fault all lies at the door of either one or the other. Both are almost always more or less to blame. If, then, we find Dante's affection for his wife so completely eliminated, we are justified in supposing that his heart had been alienated by no trifling faults; and the more so when we reflect on our poet's constancy to his friends, and the warmth of his admiration for those whom he regarded as his superiors, such as Virgil, Guido Guinicelli, and others.

Weighing everything, then, we conclude that though Boccaccio does not allege a single discreditable act against Gemma, his statement permits us to suspect that she was not free from faults of which he had no special knowledge, or which he did not choose to enumerate.

XV. IS BOCCACCIO'S STATEMENT TRUSTWORTHY?

If the poet was determined not to meet his wife again, the fact cannot have been concealed. Andrea Poggi, Boccaccio's friend, would have heard it spoken of at home. Nor indeed would Beatrice have come to support her father with her presence had she not known that her mother, with whom the first duty lay, could not or would not undertake it. Either of these two therefore, to say nothing of the popular tradition, would be in a position to inform Boccaccio of the fact. No doubt the cause of it would also have been discussed in their presence, though, of course, with the reserve demanded by their youth, and by the delicate nature of the subject. But the fact itself must necessarily have been mentioned, and this not only in the early years of Dante's exile but throughout its whole duration.

[1] *Op. cit.*, i. cap. 8, near the beginning.

It seems to me therefore beside the mark to insist, with Scartazzini,[1] that when Dante was exiled Andrea Poggi could hardly have been born. And for the rest we have every reason to doubt the truth of the assertion itself. We note from Boccaccio's account, repeated almost word for word in the Life and in the Commentary,[2] that 'some five years or more' after Dante's condemnation 'Madame Gemma caused a search to be made in certain desks which she had concealed on the occasion of the disasters in 1302, with a view of finding certain instruments and writings which she required to establish her rights.' Now the person to whom she intrusted the keys of the desks and the charge of the search was Andrea Poggi, who must therefore have been a suitable person for such an office in 1307 or 1308, and so must have seen the light considerably before 1302.

This same fact as to her dowry further disproves Scartizzini's[3] conjecture that Gemma may have died soon after Dante's exile, 'in grief at the heavy misfortunes which had fallen upon her husband and her children.' If, as Boccaccio tell us,[4] she laboriously recovered some portion of her husband's possessions, by title of her dowry, and on the proceeds 'provided, meagrely enough, for herself and for her children,' we must admit that she was still living at any rate several years after 1308. But this is not all. Other notices prove that at least as late as 1314 she was still living. In the above-mentioned will of Madonna Maria, widow of Manetto Donati, which was drawn up on the 17th February 1314 (presumably in Florentine style, which would make it our 1315) we find the following legacy:[5]

'Item voluit, quod de bonis suis dent et solventur Dominae Gemmae, filiae suae, uxori Dantis Aligherii de Florentia, post

[1] *Revista internaz.*, p. 67.
[2] See above, pp. 225 *sq.*
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 68.
[4] *Vita*, p. 24.
[5] Gargani, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

mortem sui (?) test. (?) ccc florenorum [illegible], dummodo per dictum Dantem vel suos heredes praefati heredes Dominae Mariae extracti et absoluti fuerint ab omni obligatione in qua reperirent (reperirentur?) obligati vel legati quacumque de causa pro ipso Dante cujuscumque (cuicumque?) personae seu personis. Et maxime de obligatione, qua (?) D. Manectus fecit tamquam fidejussor dicti Dantis, vel cum eo in solidum Pannocchiae et Jacobo de Corbizis de florenis cccclxxx auri, sive plus, sive minus. Et de obligatione xc flor. auri sive plus sive minus in quibus sunt obligati pro (?) Ubaldino pro dicto Dante, sive in solidum, sive fidejussorio nomine pro eo, et de obligatione xlvi. (floren.) auri sive plus sive minus, pro quibus sunt obligati dictus Dom. Manettus (vel heredes ejus) pro dicto Dante, sive cum eo in solidum, sive fidejussorio nomine cum eo.'[1]

Instead of saying with Scartazzini, therefore, that Gemma may have died between 1302 and 1314, we may hold it for certain that in the early months of 1314 (or rather of 1315) she was still living.[2]

XVI. THE THIRD PASSAGE. JUDGMENT ON GEMMA'S CHARACTER

There is yet another passage in the *Vita di Dante* which we have not considered, and which, at any rate at first sight, seems to bring most serious accusations against Madonna Gemma. After saying that when his friends had induced Dante to marry, 'many fresh burdens yet more grievous might take the place of his amorous woes,' Boccaccio goes on:[3]

'He who had been wont to keep vigil at his sacred studies, etc., must now, whensoever it pleased his new lady, . . . needs

[1] The purport of this document is that the legacy to Gemma of ccc florins is not to be paid if Maria's estate (or rather her husband Manetto's) is still liable to claims on account of Dante's debts. See Appendix.—ED.

[2] Since the date of this essay Professor Bartoli has published a portion of a document of the date November 3, 1332, in which Gemma 'his [Jacopo Alighieri's] mother and the late Dante's widow' gives her consent to a sale.—*Storia della Lit. It.*, v. 107, 108 (1884).—ED.

[3] *Vita*, p. 16.

listen to female chatter . . . he who was wont, when weary of the vulgar herd, to withdraw into some solitary place and there consider in his speculations . . . must now not only leave these sweet contemplations as often as the whim seizes his new lady, but must submit to company that ill assorts with such like things. He that was wont to laugh . . . and sigh at his will as sweet or bitter emotions pierced him, now dares it not; for he must needs render an account to his lady, not only of greater affairs but of every little sigh, explaining what started it, whence it came, and whither it tended; for she takes gladness as evidence of love for another, and sadness of hatred for herself.'[1]

Let us observe in the first place that in all this list of sufferings which a bachelor is sure to encounter if he determines to marry in somewhat advanced life, there is no mention [?] of dissoluteness or other vice in his wife, but only the claims which love itself may prompt in an affectionate wife, and of considerations which the domestic life will necessarily impose upon the husband if he has any decency. Let us add that the ways which struck Boccaccio as so intolerable are not attributed personally to Gemma, but are supposed to be common to all the sex. Let us note in conclusion that throughout this passage the biographer does not use the imperfect or perfect tense, as he would have done if he had been referring to an actual occurrence, but the present tense, as indicating what was likely to happen. And finally, he expressly protests that he does not assert that they actually occurred in Dante's case, for he does not know it.

In the opening part of this long discourse against poets or scholars marrying, Boccaccio speaks in general terms; and if, after mentioning Dante, he goes on with 'he,' it is easy to perceive that in his own mind this 'he' cannot possibly refer to Dante personally, though grammatically it might be taken so. It is most certain that in

[1] Only a few scraps of all this are preserved by the epitomiser, who runs them together with a paraphrase, however, and adds details of which there is not a trace in the original.

1292 or thereabouts Dante could not 'whensoever he chose discourse with Emperors, with Kings, and with other most exalted princes.' The only Emperor with whom he ever conversed was Henry VII., and that could only have been on the occasion of his expedition to Rome, that is to say, in the earlier days of 1310. The only King, as far as we know, with whom Dante was acquainted was Carlo Martello (a titular king at any rate); and this friendship did not begin before 1295. We are forced therefore to suppose that this 'he' must be meant impersonally of any one who has dedicated himself to the Muses and to study.[1]

We must therefore admit that the inverted eulogy of Madonna Gemma which the calumnious Boccaccio is supposed to have forged, is nowhere extant except in the fertile imagination of the misconceiving reader. Scartazzini[2] contends: 'The current reports that Gemma Donati was more intractable than Xantippe herself, and led Dante a miserable and grievous life, have no other foundation than Boccaccio's testimony.' But we must set over against this assertion the fact that in the whole of Boccaccio's Life there is not a single word which can be fairly cited as direct testimony of the intractable character of Madonna Gemma. [Cf. Scartaz. *Riv. Int.* p. 167].

XVII. DANTE'S SILENCE CONCERNING GEMMA

But it is very different when we come to ask whether the suspicions aroused by the two facts recorded by Boccaccio (not decisive in themselves, but calculated to raise a doubt) find support in other indications unfavourable to Gemma.

[1] Dr. Witte's contention as to the impersonal and general character of Boccaccio's statement is unassailable. But it is odd that he should have taken the converse with emperors and kings (that is open, by hypothesis, to philosophers in general) in this literal sense. Of course Boccaccio only means that the student can choose his own company in his books.—ED.

[2] *Rivista internaz.*, pp. 70, 71.

Every one knows the verse wherein Allighieri mentions his mother Bella with filial piety (*Inf.* viii. 45). In another passage (*Par.* xiv. 64) the poet mentions amongst the persons whom the blessed spirits desire to see again, their mothers, their fathers, and the rest who were dear to them on earth, but neither here nor elsewhere in the *Comedy* is there the smallest hint of their desire to meet their wives again.[1]

Cacciaguida announces to his descendant (*Par.* xvii. 55) that the first arrow shot from the bow of exile will be that he must 'leave all things most dear'; and amongst these we are told his wife would take the first place.—*Would* take. Yes, if Gemma and Dante had been united in true love, but this is the very point that we have to prove.

Scartazzini[2] tries to weaken this [?] argument, based on the passages from the *Paradiso* quoted above, by showing that it proves too much, because neither father, brothers, sisters, nor even children, are enumerated. Now as to fathers this seems to be an oversight on Scartazzini's part, for they are expressly mentioned in verse 65. For the rest it would hardly occur to the poet to draw up a table of relationships.

Cesare Balbo[3] admits that from Dante's persistent silence concerning Gemma we might argue that his feeling towards her was rather one of respect (?) than of affection, but he infers that the fault was in Dante alone, and not in his wife. This would be sound enough if we knew that Gemma had always remained worthy of affection in the eyes of her husband himself. But certain passages of the *Comedy* give grounds for doubting this.

[1] Note that the spirits referred to in this particular passage are the denizens of the Sun, that is to say, the great doctors and teachers. Had Dante given even the 'smallest hint' that they wanted to 'meet their wives again' it would have been equally startling (though for opposite reasons) whether he referred to Thomas Aquinas and Buonaventura on the one hand or Solomon on the other.—ED.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 69.

[3] *Ubi supra*, and ii. cap. 16, p. 399, first edition.

XVIII. NINO VISCONTI'S DENUNCIATION OF WOMEN

In the eighth canto of the *Purgatorio*, Nino Visconti, judge of Gallura, who was bound by affectionate intimacy to our poet, conjures him on his return from his pilgrimage to tell his daughter Giovanna to pray that his time of punishment may be shortened. He turned to his daughter, and not to his widow, Beatrice da Este, Giovanna's mother, because scarcely four years after her husband's death she had married the Milanese Galeazzo Visconti, some years her junior:

'I think not that her mother loves me any more, since she has changed her widow's weeds, which, poor wretch, she shall yet have cause to long for. . . . Not so fair a funeral monument shall the viper that leads the Milanese afield make for her as would have done Gallura's cock.'

But such inconstancy, he adds, is not so much an individual defect of Beatrice's as a vice common to the sex:

'By her it is easy to understand how long the flame of love endures in woman if eye and touch frequently rekindle it not.'

These verses, though a poetical fiction assigns them to the date of 1300, were actually written between 1313 and 1319, when Dante and Gemma, therefore, had not seen each other for more than a dozen years, a long period, during which neither eye nor touch could have rekindled conjugal love in her. It is impossible therefore that the application to his own wife can have been absent from the poet's mind.

Tommaseo, the only Commentator as far as I have observed who has noted the venom which these verses hide for Gemma, observes at the end of the canto, 'The tender words, "the white weeds which the poor wretch is destined yet to long for," justify Dante's praise of his friend's "righteous and measured wrath" (wrath over which the

poet's own mind did not always keep the mastery); and prove to me that when he wrote his too bitter words against the woman in whom love endures not, he was not thinking of Gemma. Perhaps he was thinking of her when he wrote the last word that Pia utters to him' [Ed. 1865]. This 'last word' is found in the concluding verse of the fifth canto of the *Purgatorio*: 'Maremma unmade me, as he knows who espoused me, who had previously been wedded, with his gem (*gemma*)'; but I confess that I cannot divine in what sense Dante could be thinking of Gemma when he wrote these verses telling of a husband who murdered his own wife.

XIX. SCARTAZZINI'S INTERPRETATION

Scartazzini[1] will not admit that Dante's words are directed to Gemma, and says that they are not in any sense applicable to her. And this is why: 'It is true that Dante wrote the words about 1314, but he represented them as uttered in 1300 when he was living with his wife. Therefore in interpreting and applying them we must understand them as said in 1300, not 1314, or we shall go astray. But in 1300 eye and touch were there to rekindle the flame of love in Madonna Gemma, therefore these words are not applicable to her in any degree whatsoever.'

It is true enough that the conditions of the fiction would have prevented Dante from answering Visconti: 'Yes, my dear friend, you are perfectly justified in your invective against woman, for the very thing you mention has occurred to me.' But that is not the point. Visconti uttered a general sentiment on the mutability of woman, or rather Dante, enlightened by his own experience of many a year, puts it into his mouth. There is certainly

[1] *Riv. internaz.*, p. 69.

no lack of judgments on persons and things in the *Comedy* that bear evident marks of the influence of events later than 1300.

Nor does any greater weight appear to me to belong to another argument urged by my opponent. 'The idea that when Dante uttered general sentiments he had some special person, presumably one of his relatives, in view, leads to absurdities. For in that case Visconti's words would apply rather to Bella, his mother, than to Gemma, and would strike the former far more heavily than the latter.'—If, as is now supposed, Bella[1] was Allighiero Allighieri's first wife, she must already have been triumphantly rejoicing in her crown in the high Olympus, exempt from all human suspicions, for some decades by 1300. But even supposing that, after her husband's death, Dante's mother was still living as a widow in 1314, or somewhat later, her venerable age would have sufficed to shield her from the reproach of having broken faith with the cinders of Allighieri.[2]

XX. FORESE DONATI SPEAKS OF DANTE AS A FELLOW-CULPRIT IN HIS OWN TRANSGRESSIONS

Let us pass on to another point. Forese Donati, another friend of the poet's, and also a relative of Gemma's, is being purged on the sixth cornice from the vice of gluttony. The old Commentators declare that 'he was scabby in his

[1] Passerini, in *Dante e il suo secolo*, p. 63.—Alfr. di Reumont, in the *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Dante-Gesellchaft*, ii. 337.

[2] The reader will hardly take this portion of the argument very seriously on either side; but it may be interesting to note that Francesco, the son of Lapa, Allighiero's *second* wife, was legally capable of contracting a debt (*i.e.* was at least eighteen years old) by December 23rd, 1297. (Lapa herself was apparently still living on May 16th, 1332.) Dante's mother, Bella, must therefore have died before 1279. See Scherillo, *Alcuni Capitoli della Biographia di Dante*. 1896. pp. 28-30. and the authorities there cited.—Ed.

face and covered with boils,' and 'much corrupted by the vice of gluttony,' and another, 'As a self-indulgent man he took delight in good living.' In a sonnet attributed to Dante[1] he is reproached with having swallowed all his property, so that he is now forced to steal other people's. And in the fragment of another[2] with suffering from excessive indulgence in starlings' breasts, and from the still worse effects of lambs' tails.[3]

Here, on the sixth cornice, Forese, perceiving that Dante's body, unlike the shades of Purgatory, casts a shadow, and arguing that he must still be living in the first life, begs him to explain the wonder. The poet answers: 'If thou call back to mind what thou wast with me, and what I was with thee, the present memory thereof will still be grievous.' In my first article[4] I reproduced the meaning of the passage thus: 'Dante confesses that he was guilty, during the first years of his married life, of

[1] Beginning with the line: 'Bicci novel, figliuol di non so cui' (Fraticelli, *Canzionere di Dante*, Firenze, 1861, p. 285).—Before the citation of this sonnet in the Commentary of the *Anonimo* was known, I myself, in common with many others, regarded it as apocryphal. In his Commentary on *Purg.* xxiii. 48, Scartazzini remarks with perfect justice that the citation 'furnishes a weighty argument for the authenticity of the sonnet.' He then adds: 'We need not flatter ourselves that this will serve to bring the eminent critics to repentance, and convince them that their critical principles are utterly erroneous. On the contrary, they will cast about for subterfuges, and will defend their opinion in the teeth of the evidence of our Trecentista. And their art will still be styled criticism, nor will admirers of their acumen and learning ever be wanting.' In that case I am happy to think that these lines may suffice to convince the illustrious Dantist, that he paid me too great a compliment in mentioning me in the first rank of *critics par excellence*, in connection with this very sonnet.

[2] In the *Commento d'Anonimo Fiorentino*, edited by Fanfani. *Purg.* xxiii. p. 379.

[3] Dr. Witte, citing the original, escapes the problem of translating the jargon in which these sonnets are written. I have followed (to the best of my power) the acute decipherment of Del Lungo, *Dino Compagni e la sua Cronica*, 1879, vol. ii. pp. 615 *sq.* 'Lonza,' which I have translated 'tail,' appears to include all the parts that are usually taken off the animal with the hide.—ED.

[4] *Rivista internaz.*, p. 7 *sq.*

such gluttony that after five years the memory of it still oppressed his conscience.'

I admit that most of the Commentators who do not pass over the *terzina* altogether, speak in general terms of a worldly and sinful life, of vanity and so forth, in which the two interlocutors had been involved. Some however understand the passage as I do. Let us take Biagioli first:

'The Commentators undertand "the vicious life we led together," but I am far from agreeing with them, since I cannot find a shadow of evidence in the surviving records of Dante that his life had ever been vicious; and it is a diabolical invention to say that it was. Perhaps the two friends had sometimes indulged themselves in festive meetings, jovial supper-parties, and such like, which, though surely venial matters, may well be the subject of bitter memory beyond the grave.'

We may add the authority of Cesare Balbo:[1]

'In these verses (115-117) the Commentators find a hint of the jovial and more or less vicious life which the youthful Dante and Forese had lived together in those years. No doubt this is the true meaning; especially if we add Forese's impenitence till his death for the sin of gluttony, and all that we shall gather as we go along concerning Dante.'

Kannegiesser and Philalethes understand the passage in the same way. The latter notes:

'It seems that Dante and Forese had indulged in the pleasures of the table together in their youth, and cannot now think of the hours so spent without repenting.'

XXI. SCARTAZZINI'S INTERPRETATION

In his note on *Purgatory* xxiii. 118 Scartazzini does not differ very much from these authorities. He cites Balbo,

[1] *Vita di Dante*, i. 8, p. 195.

Berardinelli,[1] and Wegele[2] as supporting his own opinion, and goes on to say:

'Nor can we reduce all the disorders of Dante and Forese to a few festive suppers, as Biagioli does. . . . It was no such small matter as that that was in question. It was a sinful life, for which Forese delayed his penitence till the hour of death, and consequently it was a sinful life which Dante continued until Virgil came to free him from it.'

In my learned opponent's first article in answer to my 'question,'[3] this 'sinful life' unexpectedly assumes a far more distinct character.

'The life,' he says, 'of which Dante confesses himself guilty, and from which Virgil rescued him, . . . is identical with the darksome forest . . . which symbolises . . . the intellectual darkness of him who has strayed from the faith, finds himself involved in doubts, and wanders through the mazes of philosophical speculation. . . . Since Forese was Dante's most intimate friend, it is natural enough that they should often have discoursed together of graver and more serious matters than wine-shops and luncheon-bars; natural enough that Dante should have communicated to his relative and friend the doubts which his own mind harboured.'

It seems obvious to reply that, supposing Dante really had made Forese a confidant as to his inner struggles, the *bon vivant* was hardly the sort of man to answer him in a serious spirit. If Dante's perplexities as to the eternity of matter had been met by Forese's allusions to starlings' breasts and lambs' tails, this would scarcely constitute a life

[1] *Il concetto della Div. Comm.*, p. 227. 'The life in which Dante was associated for a time with Forese . . . must be taken to have been undisciplined and irregular. The poet's answer . . . must refer to the youthful errors of their festive life, to which they had mutually given each other the opportunity or the temptation, and of which they cannot now so much as think without repentance. . . . The dissipated and loose life which they must have led together.'

[2] *D. Aligh. Leben und Werke*, 2nd ed., p. 89: 'The poet's confession can hardly be understood except as referring to a dissolute period of his life.'

[3] *Rivista internaz.*, p. 70.

in common to which Dante would refer in such words as 'What thou wast with me, and what I was with thee.' But Scartazzini, in one of his most recent works,[1] attempts to meet this argument thus:

'The voluptuous Forese may naturally be supposed to have given in his adhesion to the Epicureanism then so prevalent in Italy, which only concerned itself with the life of sense. And since he conformed to it in practice he may surely have endeavoured to defend and support it theoretically also. There was no lack of material, then, for discussions with his friend, who was so devoted to philosophical studies. If, then, Dante was really approximating to an unbelieving philosophy, if he had really opened his bosom to doubts, he must certainly have spoken to his friend of the things that filled his mind. The closer the friendship the more fully must the friends have opened their hearts to each other. And if in this world they had so conversed, the meaning of Dante's words in Purgatory seems to me perfectly clear: "We must still find it grievous to think what we were, how we talked, what a path of peril we trod, what opinions we adopted, when we associated together in life."'

That this is the real significance of the words (he goes on) appears further from Dante's assertion, that he had continued the same life years after Forese's death, and had only been rescued from it by Virgil. This clearly points to a life of intellectual, not sensual error.

XXII. OBJECTIONS TO THIS INTERPRETATION OF DANTE'S WORDS

I must say that the more Scartazzini develops his explanation the greater do the difficulties appear. Let us go a little further back. On the sixth cornice of the Purgatory the poet finds his intimate friend Forese, who tells him that he is there for having 'given himself excessively to gluttony,' a confession for that matter which he might have spared, for every one knew him as a *bon*

[1] *Zu Dante's Seelengeschichte*, in vol. iv. of the *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft*, p. 177.

vivant. Then, when Forese had explained the form of punishment for gluttony, Dante asks him how it comes to pass that he, who only repented of his vice *in extremis*, and who died not five years ago, is already admitted to active purgation, in spite of the law referred to in *Purg.* iv. 130. Thereupon the other answers that he owes it entirely to the intercession of his widow.

Forese now propounds a question himself, not unlike the one the poet had addressed to him. How comes it that he (who should be dead, since he is in Purgatory) casts a shadow as though he were alive? His answer is: 'Virgil is leading me through the eternal kingdoms to remove me from my sins and errors, though I am still living.' But by way of introduction, he says: 'If you are enduring penance for your gluttony, then if you think upon our style of life together you will understand that we both of us have cause for repentance concerning it.' But, if we are to believe Scartazzini, he means to say: 'Call back to mind how we used to discourse upon philosophy; how you wanted to convert me to the doctrines of Epicurus, and I expounded to you the system of Aristotle, corrupted by the Averroists; and how I told you of my doubts concerning the truth of revelation and the authority of the Church.'

Surely Dante intended to be read, and to be understood by his readers. But if he had chosen to bury the confession of his departure from the orthodox faith in this one verse (*Purg.* xxiii. 116), we could hardly call the veil so thin that the piercing of it is an easy matter! But there is more. Dante tells us that Virgil had turned him away from the life he alluded to a few verses back, which, if we are to follow Scartazzini, would be a life of doubt, or at any rate of a somewhat vacillating faith, and Virgil would have led him back to a pure and firm faith. But the learned Commentator himself tells us, in his notes on *Purg.* xviii.

46, that 'the teachings of Virgil cannot stretch beyond the limits of human reason or philosophy' (the philosophy, to wit, of the 'master of those who know'), 'and that in all matters of faith man must look for the solution of his doubts to Beatrice, that is to say, to the spiritual and ecclesiastical authority, whose office it is to direct the human race to spiritual felicity in accordance with revelation.'

Nor is even this all. 'The present memory of that life' —that is to say, of philosophic presumption—has become grievous to the poet, therefore he repents it. But in a recent dissertation Scartazzini tells us, and I believe very rightly, that eight cantos further on, in the terrestrial Paradise, Dante was 'not only still involved in this sin, but had not yet so much as recognised that it was sinful.'[1]

Now see in what extravagances we are landed. Towards the end of the thirteenth century Dante gave himself up in company with the *bon vivant* Forese to the boldest philosophic speculations, disregarding the limits placed by Christianity upon the human reason. In 1300 Virgil the pagan, the prototype of human reason instructed by philosophy ('the sea of all wisdom'), turns him away from his life of human reason, and induces him to submit himself once again to spiritual authority.—When thus brought back to the right way, he repents, on the sixth cornice, of that life of philosophic incredulity. The present memory thereof is grievous to him. But twenty-four hours afterwards, in the terrestrial Paradise, in face of his Beatrice, we find him relapsed. Not only is he again involved in his ancient sin, but he does not for a moment admit that it is a sin at all.

[1] *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft*, iv. 221, note 140. 'When Dante appeared before Beatrice he was, of course, still tainted with that sin. For the scene in the earthly Paradise represents how his repentance for it was first awakened and then worked out. With the draught of Lethe all sins were done away and obliterated; but at the period in which Dante places his vision, *i.e.* in the year 1300, *war Dante nicht allein mit jenen Sünden noch behaftet, sondern er hatte sie noch gar nicht als solche erkannt.*'

I may be mistaken, but for myself, after a genuine attempt to get at Scartazzini's interpretation, I can but say of my own 'dubbio': 'First it was simple, but now it has become double.'

XXIII. INFERENCES FROM THE LIFE SHARED BY DANTE AND FORESE

Confirmed then in the opinion that we are to understand the *terzina* under discussion as Balbo and many others take it, we return from this long digression to our subject.

I do not say, and I have never said (though I have been represented as doing so), that Dante was at any period of his life a drunkard or a tippler. I merely infer from Dante's own words that in the early years of his marriage with Gemma he not unfrequently took his pleasure away from home at festive suppers or other such gatherings; or, speaking generally, that the life he led with his friends at this time smacked of the world. This is not inconsistent with a diligent pursuit at the same time of philosophic studies or other branches of learning. We are not unfamiliar in our own day with learned men who pass the whole day in deep scientific researches, and then feel the want of relaxation in the evening in a circle of gay companions.

Boccaccio,[1] it is true, assures us that 'in food and drink he was most moderate, both in taking them at the appointed hours, and in never going beyond the limit of necessity. Nor did he ever show any nicety in one thing rather than another. Delicate viands he praised, but for the most part fed on plain ones, blaming beyond measure such as bestow great part of their study in getting choice things and having them prepared with extremest diligence; declaring that the likes of these do not eat to live, but rather live to eat.' But we must consider that the tradition as to this matter

[1] *Vita*, p. 38.

which Boccaccio followed would refer to a period of Dante's life long subsequent to his intimacy with Forese. If then at this youthful season he perhaps indulged a little too much in the pleasures of the table, it was very natural that afterwards, when he had repented of it, he should become more abstemious than others.

Considered in themselves, these pleasures, provided they observe the limits of moderation, are innocent enough; but they must cease to be so as soon as they come into conflict with other duties. Ways of living which a bachelor can hardly avoid may be unsuitable to the father of a family. Forese, married to Nella, whose memory was dear to him even in Purgatory, was wrong to give the preference to these festive parties over the domestic quiet of evenings at his own fireside with his wife; and if Dante, in spite of his doubtless more austere character, joined in Forese's distractions when only recently united to Gemma, we may gather the degree of his conjugal felicity.

I said in my first article, and I repeat it here: 'Attending fine suppers and seeking out choice dishes is not generally supposed, at any rate in the case of grave and deliberate characters, to be any sign of perfect domestic happiness, especially if it involves the preference, by a newly married husband, of the company of his companions to that of his wife.'

To avoid misunderstanding, however, I may add that this argument alone, unsupported by others, would only prove a want of sympathy between the pair, and would by no means determine whose fault it was.

XXIV. LA BARBAGIA

Dante's conversation with Forese offers yet another passage that must be taken into consideration. After praising his Nella, Forese continues:

'My little widow, whom I greatly loved, is all the more dear and cherished by God in proportion as she is the more lonely in her good way; for the Barbagia of Sardinia is far more chaste in its women than the Barbagia in which I left her. O dear brother, what wouldst thou have me say? A future time is already within my vision, in the eyes of which this present hour shall not be very ancient, wherein the abandoned Florentine women shall be prohibited from the pulpit from displaying their breasts and bosoms.'

Forese says, or rather Dante through his mouth declares, that his widow is alone in her good way in the Barbagia wherein he left her.

But what is this Barbagia? Seeing that Forese immediately afterwards speaks of the Florentine women in general, it would seem that the Barbagia includes all Florence without distinction.

But, answers Scartazzini, how could Forese have seriously asserted that after the death of Piccarda there was not a single chaste and modest woman who pursued the good way in all Florence excepting only Nella?

We might reply that Forese is not speaking of the wives of Lapo and Bindo, but of the ladies who by acquaintance or by neighbourhood recurred familiarly to his memory. But my opponent, accepting this reply, goes on:

'Forese's words, then, would include Dante's sister, married to Leon Poggi, and Madonna Piera, the wife of Francesco Allighieri, the poet's brother; so that at this rate the poet would have accused not only his wife, but his sister and sister-in-law, of dissolute conduct.'

To confute this argument it will be well to consult the early Commentaries. This is what the *Ottimo* (on line 85) says:

'And here he highly commends this lady, insomuch as she conducted her life with such chaste modesty and cleanliness, though in the company of such evil folk as were the Donati.'

And in like manner Fanfani's *Anonimo Fiorentino* (p. 380): 'The Barbagia of Sardinia is more seemly and chaste than

is the house of the Donati wherein I left my spouse.' Following these ancient authorities, then, we should take the Barbagia to describe, in the first instance, not Florence at large but the house of the Donati.

And whom did this house contain? Neither the poet's sister, nor his sister-in-law, who sprang from the Ghibelline family of the Caleffi; but Gemma, who when the ungrateful and riotous mob rushed upon Dante's house[1] would naturally return to the neighbouring house of her father,[2] whence she afterwards despatched Andrea Poggi to search in the desks wherein she had secured the instruments and the writings which she wanted.

In this Barbagia of the Donati, then, there would not be so many women; and if Dante placed such scathing words against all of them, with the exception of Nella, upon the lips of Forese, it would be impossible to escape their application to his wife, Gemma Donati.

Scartazzini says: 'The truth is that the poet has indulged in exaggerated language without the least thought of his own belongings.' I doubt, however, if many readers will believe Allighieri guilty of such extreme carelessness. But, adds the author, 'In 1314, or thereabouts, when Dante was writing these famous verses with respect to the Florentine women, Beatrice his daughter was also living in Florence, a girl of some fourteen years. Would not she too have her share in the reproach if the poet, as he wrote, had had his own belongings in view?'

The answer is simple enough. It would have been too ludicrous if Forese, at the date of 1300 (even granting it

[1] Boccaccio, *Vita di D.*, p. 60; *Commento*, ii. p. 130.

[2] Cf. *Vita*, pp. 23, 24. 'When Dante had thus departed from the city . . . leaving behind him his wife, together with the rest of his family, whose youthful age ill adapted them to share his exile, without anxiety on her account, because he knew that she was related to one of the chief of the hostile faction . . . he wandered in uncertainty here and there through Tuscany.'

to be fictitious, had intended to throw a slur on the modesty of a child of a few years old, because she displayed '*il petto colle poppe*,' which the poor child did not so much as possess.

And moreover, how do we know that in 1314, or thereabouts, Beatrice was living in Florence? If, after her husband's departure, Gemma 'provided, meagrely enough, for herself and her children from the revenues of her dowry,' if she was forced in her poverty 'to provide for her own sustenance by unaccustomed toil,'[1] her elder daughter, Imperia, would only have been fulfilling a natural duty if, when established in Verona with her husband Tano di Bencivenni Pantaleoni, another exile,[2] she had taken charge of her youngest sister, who subsequently stayed in the city as a nun.

We confess our ignorance of the nature of those faults which justified Dante in including his own wife in his severe sentence upon the Barbagia, whether it be the Florentine women generally or only those belonging to the house of the Donati. Though at first sight it might seem that he accused her of wantonness, or at least of lack of modesty in her dress, yet he really does not say that Forese's Nella was alone amongst her associates in chastity, but generally in good ways. Any kind of evil way therefore would relegate those guilty of it to the host contrasted with Nella.

XXV. CONCLUSION

Now what can we give as the results, certain or probable, of these somewhat protracted researches?

1. That if Dante's marriage with Gemma was not contracted for love, neither did it result in love—at any rate not in love of a true character.

2. That in the process of years the affectionate relations

[1] Boccaccio, *Vita*, p. 24 [?]. [2] Passerini, in *Dante e il suo secolo*, p. 68.

of the pair were chilled, perhaps more on the husband's side than the wife's.

3. That Gemma was not a woman capable of appreciating Dante's lofty intellect.

4. That Gemma's reproaches were not without excuse from the restricted point of view of the domestic cares, with which, especially after her husband's departure, she had to struggle.

5. Possibly the poet believed his wife's ways to be somewhat loose, but of this we have no certainty; and still less whether he attributed to her any other particular faults, and if so, what.

6. That if, as we may suppose, Gemma, during the ten years of their life together, showed little sympathy for Dante, the reports of her doings after they were separated, which may have been exaggerated, fostered the alienation of their affections.

POSTSCRIPT

This little dissertation had been some time completed, and was ready for the press, when I came upon an article by Sign. Vittorio Imbriani in the first issue of the *Rivista Europea* for this year, entitled 'Was Gemma Donati a Good Wife?' Although this review has *Rivista Internazionale* for a second title, to indicate that it is a continuation of the one formerly published by the same firm, yet it seems that the four articles referring to this subject which saw the light two years ago in the *Internazionale* are absolutely unknown to the learned author of this new essay.

I am all the better pleased. For if the points I urged have been discovered and recognised by one who knew nothing of my 'dubbio,' it seems one must suppose them conclusive indeed; and in truth we are in perfect harmony

with respect to the main contention, and I might confine myself to pointing out the coincidence, were it not that the picture of the poet's conjugal life with Gemma which Sign. Imbriani presents is far darker than I consider we have any reason to suppose it really was. According to him, Sister Beatrice, the nun of St. Stefano dell' Uliva, was begotten by Dante in adultery with some unknown person; and on the other side the prophetic threats of lines 106-111 in *Purg.* xxiii. are to be referred to the vengeance which Allighieri, as he wrote this passage, hoped he might soon be able to take on Gemma when he re-entered Florence in the suite of Ugguccione of Faggiuola.

'And dismal,' continues the article in question, 'would have been the fate of the guilty one if the passionate and rancorous Allagherio had been able to set his foot again in his desecrated home.' . . . 'And when he speaks of children who have not the down upon their cheeks feeling the chastisement, who knows that he is not again alluding to the offspring foisted upon the homes of the exiles by their shameless wives.'

As for Gemma, I can only repeat what I have said above. Perhaps Dante believed his wife's ways to be somewhat loose, but of this we have no certainty; and still less whether he attributed to her any other particular faults, and if so, what.'

That the members of a pious fraternity such as the Company of Or' San Michele should have decided to make a present of some value to a nun who, if she was really Dante's daughter, was the fruit of iniquity, whilst there was no lack of legitimate descendants, strikes me as highly improbable.

For the rest I agree with Sign. Imbriani that numerous children are no proof of mutual happiness between husband and wife; but I must confess that I too have often had doubts as to the number of children which the biographers attribute to Dante and Gemma. I see that Todeschini[1]

[1] *Scritti su Dante*, i. 333 *sq.*

also shares them; but I would not assert with Imbriani that Pietro and Jacopo were the only two apart from Beatrice. Lionardo Aretino, who was personally acquainted with a grandson of Pietro's, tells us in his *Vita* that Dante 'had, amongst other children, a son called Pietro,' thereby indicating that the number of his offspring must have been at least three.[1]

[1] Jacopo, Pietro, Antonia, and Beatrice, are the children whose existence is now generally regarded as established. The Imperia mentioned in the body of this essay (p. 258) is questioned.—ED.

X.—THE TWO VERSIONS OF BOCCACCIO'S LIFE OF DANTE

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 87-120 (1879).]

I. PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

THE manuscripts of Giovanni Boccaccio's little work entitled *The Life and Ways of Dante Allighieri the Florentine Poet* are very numerous. Mazzuchelli [1] has counted as many as sixteen in Florence alone, and this does not include the Riccardian manuscripts, of which, as a fact, there are ten. But the contents of these manuscripts differ widely. In some the booklet has only about two-thirds of the bulk which it has in the others. We may speak of these latter as containing the complete text, and the others as containing the compendium.

The complete text has been printed more than a dozen times since the year 1477, whereas the compendium was first published in 1809, and, as far as I know, has only been reprinted three times.

The first to note the difference between the two redactions seems to have been Biscioni. Annotating a passage in his edition of the 'Life of Dante,' [2] he gives the corresponding readings of three Florentine manuscripts (one being Salvini's, one a Laurentian (No. 1 in our list), and one belonging to the Buonarotti) and adds: [3] 'Note that this Life of Dante has been epitomised from another; for not only in this passage (which I have cited by way of

[1] *Scrittori d'Italia*, ii. p. 1357, note 243.
[2] P. 57 in Milanesi's edition.
[3] *Prose di Dante Aligh. e di M. Gio. Boccacci*, p. 376.

example) but throughout the Life we observe the same way of going to work. It is nothing short of a rending and destroying of Boccaccio's exquisite composition, as any one may plainly see.'—In like manner one of the early librarians of the Riccardian, probably Lami, wrote on the first folio of some of the manuscripts of the Life that they contain it only in an abbreviated form.

II. MANUSCRIPTS

The manuscripts of the complete work which I have examined are the following:

I. In Florence:
- A. Laurentian:
  1. Plut. xliii. cod. 26.[1] Cited by Mazzuchelli as xliii. 25.
  2. Plut. xc. sup. cod. 63.[2]
  3. Plut. xc. sup. cod. 135. 1.[3]
- B. National:
  4. Magliabecchian 260, formerly in possession of Senatore Carlo di Tommaso Strozzi, cited by Mazzuchelli.
  5. Panciatichi ii. 1. 56.
  6. Palatino vii. 712.
- C. Riccardian:
  7. No. 1079, written in 1472.
  8. No. 1050, fragmentary, used by Milanesi, and also for the *Vita Nuova* by Biscioni, Giuliani, and d'Ancona.
  9. No. 1054.
  10. No. 1070, wanting the first folio and the last two-fifths.
  11. No. 1079, written in 1456.
  12. No. 1120, wanting in the first two folios.

In addition to the Riccardian MSS. Nos. 7, 9, and 10 above, Moutier mentions his use of a Riccard. 2278, which I have not seen.

II. In Venice, Library of San Marco:
- 13. Cl. x. cod. 12.
- 14. Cl. xi. cod. 36, written in 1420 by Paolo di Duccio Tosi di Pisa.

These two MSS. served Bart. Gamba for his edition of 1825.

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[1] Bandini, *Cat. Bibl. Laur.*, v. 223, No. xxiv.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 369, No. vii. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 405, No. v.

Of the Compendium I have come across the following MSS.:

I. In Florence:
  A. Laurentian:
    1. Plut. lxi. cod. 41, completed on the 23rd July 1475, cited by Mazzuchelli as li. 41, and by Biscioni.
  B. National:
    2. Magliabecchian ii. 1. 62, formerly belonging to the Casa Gaddi, written in 1470.
    3. Magliabecchian viii. 10, parchment, small quarto, written in 1430, and very beautiful.
    4. Palatine v. 280, parchment, large quarto, also a choice MS.
  C. Riccardian:
    5. Cod. 1080, former press-mark vi. 1. 1204.
    6. Cod. 1083, former press-mark ii. 11, 340, written in the year 1433.
    7. Cod. 1085, 'extremely incorrect,' says the note of some former librarian.
    8. Cod. 1090, formerly vi. 1175, of great beauty. 'This MS. and the one registered above as No. 5 are miscellaneous collections; neither is dated, but from matters pertaining to the conspiracy of Stefano Porcari which they contain, it is clear that they cannot be earlier than 1453.
    9. Cod. 2330, parchment, quarto. From the other opuscula contained in the MS. it is clear that it cannot have been written before 1461.
II. In Milan:
  10. In the library of the Marchese Gian Giac. Trivulzio, formerly possessed by the painter Gius. Bossi, written in the year 1437. Served as the foundation of the edition of Mussi, 1809.
  11. Belonging to the March. Girolamo d'Adda, parchment, written with extreme beauty.

III. EDITIONS OF THE COMPLETE TEXT

1. The first printed edition of the *Vita di Dante* precedes the edition of the *Divine Comedy* with Jacopo della Lana's Commentary (wrongly attributed to Benvenuto da Imola)

issued at Venice by Vendelino da Spira in 1477 in folio), but many copies of the principal work are without it.

The judgment passed on this edition by Bartolommeo Gamba in the dedication of his own edition of the work is rather hostile than otherwise. He says it was 'copied haphazard from some manuscript . . . and in all respects is an unfortunate work, worthy of the editor who had the bad taste to print at the close of the work' . . . (the well-known barbarous sonnet).—It is true that errors of the press abound, and that the orthography is villainous, but these defects are common to the greater part of the publications of the fifteenth century, not excepting the vaunted Nidobeatine. Apart from these blemishes the text is far better than Sermartelli's, which the old Vocabolaristi honoured by taking their citations from it.—By way of impressing upon his readers the frequent mistakes of the editions previous to his own, Gamba enumerates eighteen of the most monstrous, an enumeration by the way which is not free from errors itself. But if the worthy librarian of San Marco, to whom I would offer my sincerest gratitude all these years after his death, had compared the Vendelino edition, he would have found one-half (nine) of the corrections, which his manuscript copies suggested to him, already in print.

This *editio princeps* is the only one which divides the work into twenty-eight numbered chapters, each with its subject written at the head.

2. The second edition, which appeared at Rome in 1544 in very small octavo, is due to Francesco Priscianese, a Florentine. The dedication to Giovan Lodovico Pio speaks of the booklet as 'a rare thing and a new,' and other arguments combine to prove that the editor was not acquainted with the edition of Vendelino. Not only does he sometimes substitute readings which we can have no hesitation in pronouncing erroneous for the certainly

correct ones of Vendelino,[1] but we find gaps in his edition where that of 1477 is complete. The most noteworthy example is that of the verses composed by Giovanni di Virgilio for Dante's sepulchre, all fourteen of which are given, though incorrectly enough, in the old edition, whereas Priscianese simply says, 'The above-mentioned verses are wanting.'

For the rest, the manuscript of which the new editor made use must have been closely allied to that which had served his predecessor. It is true that the catalogue of 'the chief matters contained in the work' numbers fifty-one articles, but they are not incorporated in the body of the work; and the sections of the work itself, with the first words in capitals, indicate twenty-eight chapters, generally, but not always, coinciding with those of Vendelino's edition. The readings are very frequently identical. For instance, in the Proem alone no less than twenty-three of the variants from the received text which I have noted are common to the two editions. In spite of this, we note that, generally speaking, the manuscript used by Priscianese must have been the better of the two. Of the eighteen corrections which Gamba believed himself to have introduced into the text, the Roman edition presents us with three more in addition to the nine which are found in Vendelino's.

3. The *Vita di Dante* was published for the third time by Bartolommeo Sermartelli in Florence in 1576. Neither on the title-page nor in the dedication of the volume, which includes the *Vita Nuova* and all the *Canzoni*, does the editor tell us whence he derived the text of the biography. It seems certain, however, that he made no use of the previous editions. The mistakes of this new edition which might

[1] In the Proem (Milan., p. 3), in place of 'alquanto ancora ne fanno chiari,' Priscianese reads 'alquante ancor ne fanno chiare,' and further on, 'contro a ogni humano auuenimento' instead of 'avvedimento.' Where Vendelino rightly has 1321 for the year of the poet's death (Milan., p. 28), Priscianese gives MCCCXXII.

have been corrected by a glance at Priscianese's, are so numerous, and often so childish, that even such a careless editor as Sermartelli could not have failed to make use of so obvious a means of correcting them had he come across it.

A few examples selected from passages to which Gamba did not call attention will serve to prove the point:

Milanesi, p. 9: 'avvedendosi che . . . senza le istorie, e la morale e naturale filosofia le poetiche intenzioni avere non si poteano intere; partendo i tempi debitamente le istorie da sè, e la filosofia sotto diversi dottori s'argomentò . . . d'intendere.' Sermartelli: 'auuedendosi . . . senza le storie, da se, et dalla filosofia, sotto diuersi dottori s'argomentò, . . . di intendere.'—Milanesi, p. 10: 'Gli studii generalmente sogliono solitudine e rimozione di sollecitudine . . . desiderare.' Sermartelli: 'Gli studii, sogliono generalmente, solitudine, e rimozione di solitudine . . . desiderare.'—Milanesi, p. 11: 'il cui nome era Bice (comecchè egli sempre dal suo primitivo nome, cioè Beatrice, la nominasse).' Sermartelli: 'il cui nome era Bice (come che egli sempre dal suo primitivo nome venne) cioè Beatrice nominasse.'—Milanesi, p. 12: 'Tanto solamente non voglio che non detto trapassi, cioè che, secondo ch' egli scrive e che per altrui a cui fu noto il suo disio si ragiona, onestissimo fu questo suo amore.' Sermartelli: 'In tanto, non solamente, non voglio che n'ho detto trapassi, acciò che secondo egli scriue che per altrui a cui fa noto desio, si ragiona, fu honestissimo il suo amore.'—Milanesi, p. 13: 'incitatore di quello; argomento a ciò prendendo dalle cose leggiadramente nel fiorentino idioma e in rima e in laude della donna amata, e acciocchè li suoi ardori e amorosi concetti esprimesse, già fatte da lui; ma certo io nol consento.' Sermartelli: 'incitatore di quello argomento, acciò prendendo leggiadramente, nel Fiorentino Idioma, et in rima, in lode della donna amata. Et acciò che li suoi ardori, et amorosi concetti esprimesse, già fatti da lui, ma certo io non lo sconsento.'—Milanesi, p. 14: 'comecchè egli poco . . . altrui che ad amici veder si lasciasse.' Sermartelli: 'come che egli poco, . . . à altrui ben che a' miei, vedere si lasciasse.'—Milanesi, p. 15: 'Chi sarebbe colui che . . . menasse alcuno . . . dell' isola di Cipri, per riscaldarsi nelle eterne ombre de' monti Rodopei?' Sermartelli: 'Chi sarè colui che . . . menasse alcuno . . . nell' isola di Cipri, nelle eterne ombre de monti Rodopei?'—Milanesi, p. 17: 'Egli usato liberamente di ridere, di piangere . . . secondochè le

passioni dolci o amare il pungevano.' Sermartelli: 'egli vsato liberamente di ridere, di piagnere . . . secondo che le passioni, dolcezze, ò amore il pungeuano.'

Apart from such gross blunders, the text followed by Sermartelli must have been very incorrect. Omissions of one or more words are frequent, substitutions of one word for another of like but not identical meaning, false punctuation which destroys the sense, and so forth, are of constant occurrence; but there are also alterations which seem due not to the more or less faulty nature of the manuscripts Sermartelli used but rather to some arbitrary change introduced by himself. Similar disfigurements also characterise the text of the *Vita Nuova*, which is included in the same volume, and in my catalogue of the editions of the latter[1] I have expressed my opinion that the editor, living after the Council of Trent, must have changed the text with the idea of defending the work he was printing against the censures of the Santo Ufficio. The most notable example of such a proceeding is the omission of the whole passage that refers to Dante's *Monarchia*,[2] a book repeatedly denounced as heretical.

It is truly surprising that the Vocabolaristi of the first three editions should have taken no less than thirty examples from such a defective work; but their having done so was certainly the reason why this villainous text was reprinted at least four times.

4. Mazzuchelli[3] mentions an edition of the *Vita di Dante* printed at Florence in octavo in 1587. As I have never seen it nor discovered any account of it I cannot tell whether it was, as I suspect, merely a reprint of Sermartelli's or whether it made use of other texts. It is possible, however, that it is simply the edition of 1576, and that its mention as a separate work is due to a mistake of date.

[1] *La Vita N. di D. All.* (Leipzig, 1876), p. xxxii.
[2] Milan., pp. 66, 67.
[3] See above, p. 262, note 1.

5. Under the anagram 'Cillenio Zacclori,' Lorenzo Ciccarelli republished the *Vita di Dante* in the fourth volume of his *Opere di M. Giov. Boccacci*, Naples, 1723, octavo, but falsely dated at Florence. The title-page declares it to be 'not mutilated in various passages, as Bartolommeo Sermartelli presented it in the year 1576, but complete as it was written by the author.' In spite of this, however, it is perfectly clear that Ciccarelli substantially reproduced Sermartelli's edition with all its blunders. Indeed every one of the mistakes which Gamba pointed out, and the others which we have noted above, reappear under the new editor. Biscioni's criticism, in his notes,[1] seems to me therefore thoroughly justified, and if Gamba, who expressed himself in much the same sense in the introduction to his Life of Dante,[2] seems at first sight to retract his censure in his *Serie dei Testi di lingua*,[3] I believe we must really refer his more favourable judgment to other works of Boccaccio contained in the same collection of Ciccarelli's.

The only gap in the Florentine edition which Ciccarelli supplies, as far as I have been able to ascertain, is the one that refers to the *Monarchia*, and for this purpose it would seem that the new editor turned neither to manuscripts nor to the Roman edition, but to that of Vendelino da Spira.

6. Far superior to all the preceding editions is that of Anton Maria Biscioni, included in the *Prose di Dante Alighieri e di M. Giov. Boccacci*, published at Florence by Tartini and Franchi in 1723 in quarto. In his notes[4] Biscioni tells us that 'the old Roman edition produced by Francesco Priscianese, of Florence, in octavo, 1544, has served as the basis of this edition'; and in truth all the mistakes which a comparison with the Roman edition alone would

[1] Pp. 370-374. [2] P. xxviii.
[3] Fourth edition of 1839, No. 235 [cf. 207].
[4] Pp. 370, 371.

enable him to correct are removed, and even where this was insufficient to re-establish the text, Biscioni generally perceived that it was corrupt and did his best to amend it. Thus, for example, *à propos* of the sepulchral inscription of Giov. del Virgilio, which was to have been inscribed on the poet's tomb, but was not, the Roman edition says: 'pensando le presenti cose per me scritte, come che in sepoltura, non sieno corporali[1] ma siano (si come quella sarebbe stata) perpetue conseruatrici della cui[2] memoria.' Biscioni simply strikes out the two words 'che in,' reduces[3] the 'perpetue conservatrici' to the singular number, and substitutes 'colui' for 'cui.'—Gamba, perhaps following one of the manuscripts of San Marco, essentially changes the sense, and writes 'pensando le presenti cose per me scritte, comechè in sepoltura non sieno con parole, sieno (siccome quella sarrebbe stata) perpetue conservatrici della colui memoria.'—The two editions of Moutier and Milanesi very properly return to Biscioni's text, with the sole difference that instead of the simple 'come' they restore Priscianese's 'comechè.'

In one passage of his notes Biscioni appeals to the authority of 'all the manuscripts,' and in another he particularly cites the text of the Guicciardini MS. The very small number of various readings which he registers makes us suppose, however, that his collations did not cover the whole text word by word, but were limited to a small number of passages arbitrarily selected.

Biscioni's edition was taken as the basis of those of Gamba, of Moutier, and of Milanesi; but it is particularly surprising that these editors, while adopting the other corrections given at the end of the book, passed over the one which Biscioni himself rightly regarded as the most important of all. Towards the end of his Proem, Messer

[1] Vendelino: 'come chen sepultura corporale scripte non sienno.'
[2] *Ibid.*: 'dalla chui lui.'
[3] With Vendelino.

Giovanni, after having reproached the Florentine Republic with not having reared some monument or the like in honour of its poet, says he himself would fain do that which ought to have been the concern of the Commonwealth. He cannot do it by statue or choice sepulchre, to the which his powers would not stretch, 'ma,' continued Vendelino's edition, 'con lettere pouere a tanta inpresa. Di questo o di queste daro.' Priscianese's reading is far inferior: 'con lettere pouere à tanta impresa di queste, et di queste dirò,' and so is Sermartelli's: 'Ma con lettere ecc., di questa, ò di queste dare.' None of these readings give any sense.[1] Biscioni, having adopted Priscianese's reading, subsequently perceived the error, but too late to correct it in the text. In his notes, however, he gives us a specimen of the edition mentioned above under No. 5 side by side with his own, to show the greater correctness of the latter, and he tells us[2] that he has selected a passage at the end of the Proem so as 'to take the same opportunity of correcting an error which has been overlooked' in his own edition. Then in the 'specimen' we find in brackets after the words quoted above ['leggi: di queste ho, e di queste darò,—cioè di queste le quali io ho, darò'].

We can see at a glance that this reading is not only correct, but the only one that gives a proper sense. Two of the five manuscripts[3] which I have examined give it exactly so, and the three others[4] with the smallest variations. In spite of all this neither Gamba nor Moutier gives the smallest hint of the correction which Biscioni had already made. Milanesi adopted it, but as an improvement introduced by himself, 'supported by the best manuscripts.'

7. A new edition of the Life of Dante in octavo was issued in 1802 from the press of the brothers Amoretti of

[1] So here too the edition cited by the 'Vocabularists' is the worst of all. [2] P. 372. [3] Nos. 1 and 2.

[4] Nos. 4 and 5, 'di queste o e di queste daro'; No 3, 'di queste o di questi daro.'

Parma, though it bears no intimation either of date or place. Though very neatly printed, it is really nothing but an exact copy of Ciccarelli's text, perpetuating all the blunders. If, for instance, the Neapolitan editor, following Vendelino's edition, had called the Antipope Nicholas v. 'Pietro della Cornara,' the Parma editor never thought of substituting 'P. d. Corvara,' although, without looking at manuscripts or printed editions, this correction would have suggested itself to any one who was not ignorant of the first elements of the history of the fourteenth century.

8. The Milan edition of the *Vita* appended to the fourth volume of the *Decamerone* in the collection of the Italian Classics, 1803, I have never seen; and in face of Gamba's assertion that it too is merely a reprint of the abominable Neapolitan edition I have not thought it worth while to try to obtain it.

9. The edition of Bartolommeo Gamba (Venezia, Alvisopoli, 1825, 16mo) far surpasses all its predecessors in the correctness of its text. The editor tells us that he has 'consulted the Florentine edition of 1723 with great advantage, but not without comparing it in doubtful cases with the *editio princeps* of 1477, the Roman edition of 1544, the Florentine edition of 1576, and even the Milan edition of 1809, though the latter is no more than a compendium.'—'But,' he adds, 'all these would have been feeble resources if I had not been able to make use of two ancient codices in the library of San Marco.' These codices have been registered above in the list of manuscripts of the complete Life under numbers 13 and 14.

The text is not supplied with notes to indicate the corrections, or the authority on which they rest. But to show the reader how many blunders deform the unhappy *Vita di Dante*, the editor, as noted above, pointed out certain cases of contrast between his own edition and its immediate predecessor, the Milan edition (in the

collection of Classics, copied from the 'pessima' of Naples). But the truth is that almost all these 'pollutions' are due to Sermartelli and his blind followers. Gamba in noting each of these passages exclaims, 'Messer Giovanni wrote' so-and-so, 'but what you find in your book is' so-and-so. This is doing less than justice to a well-informed reader, who would have known in 1825 how superior the Florentine edition of 1723 was to that of 1576 and its re-issues, and would therefore have made use of the *Prose di Dante e Boccaccio*, and would not be in the habit of reading the distortions of Sermartelli. Only once does Gamba vary his formula with, 'in place of printing,' and 'they have printed,' and here he gives the preference to the first Florentine edition over the second. It is where, after taxing the poet with unbounded party virulence, Boccaccio pleads his excuse for having spoken ill of his hero.[1] In the first editions,[2] with which Biscioni agrees, his words are: 'Adunque a lui mi scuso, il quale per avventura me scrivente con isdegnoso occhio da alta parte del cielo ragguarda.' Sermartelli substitutes 'sovente' for 'scrivente,' and in Gamba's preface we find,[3] 'Instead of printing "me sovente" they have printed "me scrivente."'—The two next editors (Moutier and Milanesi) follow Biscioni, and seeing that Gamba himself in the body of this work[4] retains 'me scrivente,' I suppose that the two readings have been interchanged by accident in the preface.—Sometimes the Venetian editor departs without any reason from Biscioni's text. Thus, for example, in the Proem (Milanesi's ed. p. 3 last line) the construction is imperfect without the 'comecchè,' which is omitted, but perhaps only through the compositor's carelessness.

10. The edition published in Florence in 16mo, 1826, by Pasquale Caselli, is simply a reprint of Gamba's.

[1] Milanesi, p. 56.
[2] As also in the *Compendium*.
[3] P. xxxvi.
[4] P. 80.

11. The fifteenth volume of the *Opere volgari di Giov. Boccaccio, corrette su i testi a penna*, by Ignazio Moutier, Florence, 1833, octavo, contains the *Life of Dante* and the *Ameto*. A very short preface tells us that 'the best edition is the one published in the prose works of Dante and Boccaccio, Florence, 1723. The most recent, issued at Venice in 1825, though carefully amended, has not absolved me from the necessity of comparing the most authoritative manuscripts.' These words give us to understand that the new edition is based, not upon Gamba's, but upon Biscioni's; and a comparison shows us that as a rule this is actually so. Three of the manuscripts of which Moutier tells us he made use of for the improvement of the text we have registered as numbers 7, 9, and 10. A fourth, with which I am not acquainted, is probably the Riccardian 2278.—What corrections are due to them it is difficult to determine in the absence of any indication from the editor himself, but I do not imagine they are numerous.

12. Ant. Gualb. de Marzo prefixes the *Vita* to his Commentary on the *Divine Comedy* (Florence, 1864), describing it as 'or ripurgata.' He seems to have made a casual selection between the readings of Biscioni and Gamba. The notes are not of the slightest significance.

13. The latest edition known to me is the one prefixed to Sign. Gaetano Milanesi's edition of Giov. Boccacci's *Commentary*, issued in 1863 at Florence. The prefatory note informs us that special use was made of the Riccardian manuscript registered above under No. 8 for the correction of the text, but that other manuscripts in the same library were referred to whenever necessary. This necessity must have arisen at any rate for one-third of the work, for the Riccardian text in question is wanting in the first leaf, and for the part covered by the last twenty-two pages of the new edition. It need hardly be added that after the labours

of Biscioni, Gamba, and Moutier, the corrections in any case could not have been numerous.

In spite of all this, however, I believe it would be a mistake to suppose that the text of the *Vita di Dante* is now free from blots. Take for example a passage of the Proem already cited. After reproaching the Florentines with the wrongs they did to the poet, which for some secret cause God has not yet avenged, Messer Giovanni goes on, according to the latest edition: 'Ma perocchè comecchè impunite ci paiano le mal fatte cose), quelle non solamente dobbiamo fuggire, ma ancora, bene operando di ammendarle ingegnarci'—and then, after a full stop, and with a capital: 'Conoscendo io me essere di quella medesima città, avvegnachè picciola parte, della quale (considerato li meriti) la nobilità e la virtù di Dante fu grandissima,' etc. —Now I take it that in the first place we should not leave the sentence broken across the middle, but should go on after a semicolon and without a capital. In the next place 'la nobilità e la virtù' should be included in the parenthesis, and finally the last 'di,' which does not stand in Priscianese's edition, should be cancelled.[1]

IV. EDITIONS OF THE COMPENDIUM

There is only one edition of the *Vita Compendiata*, though there are three reprints of it. This first edition, based on the manuscript numbered 10 above, is prefixed to a splendid edition of the *Divine Comedy* published in Milan, 1809, by Luigi Mussi, in large folio, limited to seventy-two copies.

A simple reproduction of it occupies the first forty-four pages of the fifth volume of the Paduan edition of the *Divine Comedy* by Gius. Campi, Fortun. Federici, and Gius. Maffei, Tipogr. della Minerva, 1822.

[1] This passage appears in the form suggested by Witte in the latest and now standard edition, by Macri-Leoni, Florence, 1888. In the elaborate introduction to this work the reader will find further bibliographical details. See Appendix.—ED.

The Ciardetti edition of the *Divine Comedy* with the Commentary of P. Baldass. Lombardi, Florence, five volumes in octavo (1830, etc.), reproduces the Paduan edition even to the pagination.

Another reprint, disfigured by many errors, precedes the edition of the *Comedy* published by Firmin Didot frères, Paris, 1844. Copies of this edition occur dated 1847 and 1853, but it is only the title-page that is changed.

As I have given no attention to correcting the text of this Compendium I cannot say whether Mussi's edition faithfully represents the Trivulzian manuscript which once belonged to Bossi, nor whether any passages of the work which need correction could be improved by a comparison with the other manuscripts.

V. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO VERSIONS OF THE VITA DI DANTE

Most of the writers who concern themselves with this double form of the Life of Dante at all have only spoken of it in the most general terms.—Sign. Teod. Paur[1] is the author who has gone most deeply into the question.

The changes made by the Epitomiser are of three kinds. For the most part he simply expresses the whole meaning of the original more briefly, but sometimes he omits more or less extensive passages, not simply for brevity's sake, but for some more special reason, and finally, though but seldom, he adds something to the text, or so alters it as to change its meaning.

VI. PARAPHRASE AND CONDENSATION

The passages which simply reproduce the ideas of the original sometimes depart so far from it in language that

[1] *Ueber die Quellen der Lebensgeschichte Dante's* (Görlitz, 1862, No. 77, p. 40).

one might suppose they had been written down from memory after an attentive reading of the passage. Here are some examples, taken at hazard rather than deliberately selected:

Original.	*Compendium.*
Milan., p. 8. From the beginning of his boyhood, when he had already learned the first elements of letters, he gave himself, not after the fashion of the nobles of to-day to childish wantonness and ease, lounging in his mother's lap, but gave up his whole boyhood, in his own city, to unbroken study of the liberal arts, and became wondrous expert therein. And as his mind and genius ripened with his years, he disposed himself, not to those studies that bring gain, whereto every one in general now hastens, but with laudable desire for perpetual fame, scorning those riches that are but for a season, he freely gave himself to the desire of having full knowledge of the fictions of the poets, and the exposition thereof by rules of art.	In his boyhood he began to give signs, manifest to whoso had regard to them, of what he was to become in his mature age, for leaving all childish pamperings he gave himself in his own city to the unbroken study of the liberal arts, and when he had become expert therein, he gave himself up not to the lucrative professions to the which every one now prematurely applies himself in his passion for gain, but, with laudable longing for perpetual fame, to speculative studies.
Milan., p. 9. Thereupon duly dividing out his time, he strove to master History by himself, and Philosophy under divers teachers, not without long study and toil. And enamoured by the sweetness of knowing the truth of things shut up in Heaven, and finding no other sweetness in this life	To History and Philosophy he gave himself in times duly partitioned; and when already expert in the one and in the other, his longing to know more increasing with the sweetness of knowing the truth of things, he gave himself up to the desire to investigate whatsoever might be comprehended

more dear, and wholly abandoning all other temporal anxiety, he gave himself up entirely to this alone. And although no part of philosophy was left unscrutinised by him, still it was on the profoundest depths of theology that, with keen intellect, he fixed himself. Nor was the result remote from the intention; for thinking nought of heat or cold, of vigils or fasts, nor any other bodily vexation, he reached by unbroken study to such knowledge of the Divine Essence and the other Separate Intelligences as may be compassed here by human intellect.

by the human intellect concerning the celestial intelligences and concerning the First Cause, with the utmost diligence. Nor were these studies accomplished in any short space, nor were they carried on without extreme discomfort, nor did he acquire the fruit of them in his own city alone.

There are many examples of passages omitted simply for the sake of brevity. Thus, to quote a single example, the long digression on the power of the carnal appetite even in men wise and worthy in other respects (Milan., pp. 56, 57) is omitted. But though the Epitomiser does not, as a rule, appear to give much heed to the impassioned discourses of his original, yet he reproduces some of the digressions in spite of their length, as for example, the discourse on poetry (Milan., pp. 42-51). The facts or anecdotes related in the complete biography reappear almost without exception in the Compendium, but, for some reason which I cannot divine, the story of the tournament at Siena which failed to move the poet from the apothecary's bench where he was sitting, or to disturb him in his reading, is omitted (Milan., p. 40).

VII. OMISSIONS FOR SOME SPECIAL REASON

We can recognise more particular reasons for the omis-

sion of some passages. The most important are those which embody the virulent invectives against the Florentines. They are all omitted or markedly mollified in the Compendium.

In place of the two pages (Milan., pp. 2-4) of reproaches which make up the greater part of the Proem in the original, the Compendium has only these few words: 'The footprints [of the ancient peoples] have not only been ill followed by . . . my Florentines, but have been so far wandered from that ambition secures every reward of virtue. And if all else concealed this thing, the unjust exile inflicted upon that most illustrious man Dante Alighieri would not suffer it to be hid. . . . Concerning this most infamous deed it is not my present intention to insist with due rebuke, but rather . . . to amend it.'—And the second passage on occasion of Dante's exile which in Milanesi's edition occupies more than a page (pp. 22, 23) is reduced to these few words: 'Such was the end of the glorious supremacy of Dante and his fellow-citizens, and such was the reward which his pious toils brought to him.' Finally the six pages in which Florence is reproached for not at any rate seeking to recover the poet's bones (Milan., pp. 31-36) are represented by some ten frigid lines, at the end of which we read: 'But let them be left to their pride, and let us, having pointed out Dante's toils and his end, turn to the other things which may be told in addition to those already related concerning him.'

VIII. ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

It remains to point out some of the few additions, and changes which alter the sense of the original, that the Epitomiser allows himself to make.

The most curious, perhaps, is the one in which he speaks of the poet's supposed amours. It is grafted clumsily

enough on the conclusion of his discourse about Dante's despair at the death of Beatrice.[1] It runs as follows:

'Nor was this the only passion experienced by our poet, who was indeed much inclined to this emotion. We find that he often sighed for other objects in maturer age; and especially after his exile, when he was living in Lucca, for a certain damsel whom he calls Pargoletta. And besides this, near the close of his life, for an Alpine lady, in the Alps of Casentino, who, if I am not misinformed, though beautiful in countenance had a goitre. And for one or the other of these he composed many and distinguished things in rhyme.' Similar statements are also found in some of the Commentaries on the *Divine Comedy*. Thus in the *Ottimo*[2] we read: 'Beatrice tells him that neither the damsel whom he calls Pargoletta in his rhymes, nor Lisetta, nor that other mountain lady, nor any other whatsoever, ought to have turned the feathers of his wings in downward flight.'[3] Still closer to our Epitomiser is the 'Anonimo Fiorentino,' published by Fanfani:[4] 'After Beatrice's death he loved a damsel of Lucca whom he calls Pargoletta, whence one of his ballads which he made for her begins: *I' mi son pargoletta bella et nova, Et son venuta*, etc. His second and last love was a damsel of Pratovecchio . . .

[1] Milanesi, p. 14.

[2] On *Purg.* xxxi. 55.

[3] Bergmann, *Les Prétendues maîtresses de Dante*, p. 39, says in this connection: 'The work known as the *Ottimo Commento*, which is extracted from Boccaccio's Commentary on the *Comedy*, speaks of Pargoletta as identical with Gentucca, the Lucchese lady.' In the first place, the author of the *Ottimo Commento* (Andrea Lancia), writing in the years 1333 and 1334, was naturally not in a position to epitomise Boccaccio's Commentary, which was begun some forty years later (Oct. 18th, 1373); and in the second place, so far from hinting that Pargoletta is identical, in his opinion, with Gentucca, he merely says in his note on the passage, '*non so che Gentucca*' (*Purg.* xxiv. 37) 'io non so che gente bassa' [showing that he did not take *Gentucca* as a woman's name at all.—ED.]. —Gius. Pitrè's Italian translation (Bologna, 1871), p. 42, leaves these blunders uncorrected.

[4] On *Inf.* ii. 104.

for whom he made a moral canzone: *Amor da che convien pur ch' i' mi doglia, Perchè la gente m oda,*' etc.[1]—Concerning the goitre of this Alpine lady loved by the poet, so far as I have noted no one but our Epitomiser says a word, except indeed the author of the very short Life of Dante published from a manuscript of Corbinelli's at the end of his Latin text of the *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, pp. 81, 82.

The Compendium does full justice to Dante's love of Beatrice, perfectly understanding that his amorous flames woke the poetic genius in him, whereas the original sees nothing in them but an amorous distraction, entirely chaste indeed, but otherwise like the rest. Let us put the respective passages side by side:

Original, p. 12.

. . . The amorous flames multiplied with his age, in such measure that nought else would give him pleasure nor repose nor comfort save beholding her. Wherefore, leaving all other affairs, he would go with the utmost solicitude wherever he might expect to see her, as though he must gain from her face and from her eyes all his weal and his entire consolation. Oh senseless judgment of lovers! Who else but they would think to reduce the flames by piling on the fuel? How many and how bitter were the thoughts, the sighs, the tears, and the other most grievous passions which afterwards, as life advanced, were endured by him by reason of this love, he hath

Compendium.

And this love not only continuing but increasing from day to day, and he having no greater desire nor consolation than that of seeing her,

as his age increased it was often enough the dolorous cause to him of heaviest sighs and bitter tears, as he showeth in part of his *Vita Nuova.*

[1] The same Commentator's note on *Purg.* xxiv. 43 is almost exactly identical.

himself in part set forth in his *Vita Nuova*; wherefore I am not careful to recount them more at length.

(P. 13.) . . . If such love could for so long season trouble his food, his sleep, and all other manner of repose, what an adversary must we not suppose it to have been to his sacred studies and his genius! Verily no slight one! Yet are there many who would make it to have been the stimulator to this very thing; arguing from what he wrote so beautifully in the Florentine idiom and in rhyme, in praise of the lady of his love, to express his ardours and his amorous conceits. But in truth I allow not this, unless I would affirm that ornate discourse is the supreme part of every science, which is not true.

What more? By the face of this damsel . . . was first waked in his bosom the genius to compose rhyming words whereof . . . in sonnets, ballads, and odes, and other compositions, he made many in her praise, right excellently, and became such a master thereof at the instigation of love, that, far surpassing the fame of other poets, he made many think that there should never be any in times to come who should have power to surpass him therein.

Consistently with this the Compendium omits the passage in the original (Milan., p. 58) which asserts that 'in his more mature life Dante was much ashamed of having composed this little book (*La Vita Nuova*).'

On the other hand the Epitomiser seems to have a still more unfavourable idea of Dante's domestic life with Gemma than Messer Giovanni had.

Original, p. 19.

It is the general nature of temporal things for one to draw another after it. Cares of the family drew Dante on to cares of the state, wherein the vain honours that are attached to public office so entangled

Compendium.

The goad of his wife drew after it for our poet another almost inevitable burden, to wit, the anxiety of bringing up his children, for in a short space of time he became the father of a family, and under com-

him, that without considering whence he had departed nor whither he was going, with loosened reins he gave himself almost wholly up to the management of these things.

pulsion of domestic cares he must needs surrender the time which he had been wont, when free, to give to lofty meditations, to thinking whence he was to get the nurses' wages and his children's clothes, and other things that must be heeded by one who liveth rather according to the opinion of the vulgar than according to philosophic truth. And how much vexation this brought to his studies may be easily seen by all. And hence perchance a yet greater thing came upon him, because his lofty mind scorned small things, and hoping that they might be stilled by greater things, he turned himself from family to public cares, wherein he was so much and so suddenly engulfed by vain honours that without observing whence he had departed or whither he was going, with loosened reins, forgetting his philosophy, he gave himself almost completely to the management . . . of public affairs.

In some passages one would say that the author of the Compendium shows himself yet more of a Catholic than the original biographer. Thus, for example, in comparing poetry with theology, Boccaccio contents himself with saying (Milan., p. 49): 'They are opposed to each other, inasmuch as theology presupposes nothing that is not true, whereas poesy presupposes some things as true which are most false and erroneous and contrary to the Christian religion.' The Epitomiser adds: 'Nor need we marvel much thereat, because the one was uttered by the Spirit,

the which is all truth, and the other was discovered by the wits of men who had either no knowledge of that Spirit or not so full a knowledge.'

And so too in the explanation of the dream of Dante's mother, the original biographer in comparing the *Comedy* to the peacock's flesh (Milan., p. 74), only says: 'The sense of the *Comedy* . . . whether you consider it morally or theologically, according as the one or the other aspect of the work pleases you, is the simple and immutable truth.' In the Compendium we read: 'As we search in many a part for the . . . sense of the *Comedy* . . . we shall find it to be the simple and immutable truth, not reeking of Gentile filth but redolent of Christian sweetness, and in nought discordant to the religion thereof.'

Boccaccio here as elsewhere delights to adorn his page with references to authors and heroes of antiquity. Sometimes the Epitomiser makes a still greater display of classical learning. Thus in the long discourse on the dangers of marriage, the original says (p. 16): 'He . . . whensoever he would . . . disputed with philosophers.' The Compendium amplifies thus: 'Sometimes in the splendid consistory of the philosophers, uniting in thought with Aristotle, with Socrates, and with Plato, he will dispute most keenly as to the truth of some conclusion.'—In like manner in the comparison of the *Comedy* to a peacock, already referred to, the Epitomiser, not content with explaining the change of the shepherd into a peacock as the poet's 'posthumous fame which, as in his other works, so supremely survives in his *Comedy*' (Milan., p. 73), goes on to say: 'Be it understood that after any man's death his works arise to preserve his name amongst posterity, and therefore instead of Alexander and Judas Maccabeus and Scipio Africanus, we have their victories and other splendid deeds. In place of Aristotle, of Solon, and of Virgil, we have their books and their compositions, eternal preservers of their names and of their

presence in the face of such as live. And thus in place of Dante we have his *Comedy*, which may most excellently be likened to a peacock.'

My last note shall refer to the passage of the original in which the writer asks how much greater Allighieri would have been, if instead of his immeasurable obstacles he had had equivalent assistance, or at any rate had had no opposition, or but very little, as is the case with so many (Milan., p. 27). 'I should say,' he replies, 'that he would have become a god upon earth,' which is in truth a little flat. The Compendium substitutes the following more sage reflection: 'And what will they say at this point who cannot even pursue their studies at home but must seek out the solitude of forests,—they whose unbroken repose and ample means supply them with all they need without thought of their own,—they who, released from wife and children, are freely at leisure to pursue their will, many of whom, unless they are sitting at ease, or if they hear the faintest murmur, cannot so much as read, to say nothing of pondering, and cannot write unless they can rest their elbow? Why, they can but say that our poet deserves to be honoured with a double crown for the obstacles he overcame and for the learning he acquired.'

Gamba thought (p. 111) that of all the changes introduced into this *Life of Dante* attributed to Boccaccio, and printed in Milan in the year 1809, the most important was to be found in the passage where the dream of the poet's mother is expounded. So he added the nine pages of this interpretation to his edition of the original. In this he was followed by Moutier, but not by Milanesi. I confess that for my part I cannot see any greater importance in the changes made by the Epitomiser here than in other parts of his work. It is true that here, as elsewhere, he deals very freely with his original, but I think it is clear enough that in the greater part of the passages that I have brought

under the reader's eye he has departed still further from it than he does here.

IX. GUESSES AS TO THE IDENTITY OF THE EPITOMISER

The preceding observations justify, if I am not mistaken, the following conclusions, if not as certainties at least as probabilities:

I. The author of the abbreviated *Life* seems to have been a Florentine. We cannot indeed safely infer this from the passages in which the Compendium (following the original) has, 'I am a citizen of this city.' 'That which our city ought . . . to have done . . . I intend to do myself,' and so forth. For these passages not only may have been, but certainly were, taken as they stand from the original. But I think a decisive argument is furnished by the persistence with which the Epitomiser rejects, or at any rate essentially softens, all the passages in reproach of the Florentines.

II. From his frequent quotations, and from the way in which he reproduced the thoughts of his original and expounds his own, it is clear that he was a man of letters and not wanting in eloquence.[1]

The passage cited above on Dante's pre-eminence over other poets leads us to suppose that our poet's precursors were not unknown to him.

III. Not unfrequently his judgments seem riper and better weighed than Boccaccio's.

IV. Though without a touch of the zealot, the Epitomiser reveals himself as a good Christian and Catholic.

[1] Gamba, Preface, pp. xxxi, xxxii: 'The compiler strikes me . . . apart from the display of rhetorical ornaments, as having preserved perfect lucidity in his arrangement and purity and elegance in his style.'—Paduan edition, vol. v. p. 6: 'In some few (?) passages, it is true, [the Compendium] differs from the received version both in words and phrases, but is certainly not inferior to it in the choiceness of its language.'

X. BOCCACCIO?

We must confess that these characteristic qualities are somewhat too general to give us much ground to hope that we shall be able to identify the person of our author. Nevertheless the attempt has been made to divine it by supposing that Boccaccio himself recast his original Life of Dante. This is what the Paduan editors of 1822 say :[1]

'We heartily concur with the scholars who affirm the *Vita* we have reprinted to be an undoubted work of the illustrious Certaldese scholar, perhaps drawn up by him with a view of clearing his former composition from the blemishes with which it was justly reproached.'

Other scholars do not seem to have shared this opinion.[2] Paur does not so much as mention the conjecture. The learned Venetian editor whom we have just cited tells us that 'this is far from being the work in the form in which it flowed from the pen of the Certaldese, and it will be difficult to prove that it is a recast by the author himself, as some have supposed.' Ugo Foscolo is also disinclined to believe it. Speaking of Mussi and his edition he says :[3]

'He prefixed a manuscript of Boccaccio's *Vita di Dante*, whether epitomised or mutilated I will not determine, but deriving its value from the supposition that the missing passages were cut out by Boccaccio himself in his maturer age, when he repented of having spoken too much of Dante's amours—though it were strange, in that case, that Leonardo Aretino, writing not more than half a century after Boccaccio, in Florence itself, had no knowledge of this recast; for otherwise he would not have reproached Boccaccio with dwelling too much on these enamourments.'

Here, as too often elsewhere, Foscolo pronounces sentence without having examined the case. In Boccaccio's original

[1] *Loc. cit.*

[2] Scartazzini however appears to favour it: *Rivista internazionale*, No. 6. p. 167.

[3] In his edition of the *Commedia* (Londra, 1843), iv. p. 128.

work neither much nor little is said 'of Dante's amours.' He speaks as he could not but speak of his most chaste love for Beatrice, and in another part of his work he adds (Milan., p. 56), 'Amid all this virtue . . . lechery found abundant place, and not only in his youthful years but even in his ripe ones.' These words, which impute to the poet a vice most unworthy of the name 'amore,' enter upon no details whatever, but such as they are, they are repeated letter for letter in the Compendium. The Epitomiser however does add something on his own account, namely just the narrative of Dante's supposed amours with Pargoletta of Lucca and the goitred lady of the Casentino.

Arguments in favour of the opinion that Boccaccio himself is the author of this recast of the Life are certainly not wanting. The Florentine Republic had employed Boccaccio in state affairs ever since 1354. The Signoria had sent him as ambassador to three of the Popes at Avignon. It had also intrusted him with the mission of inducing Petrarch to return to his fatherland. In August 1373 a decree of the same Signoria appointed him to the public readership of the *Divine Comedy*, assigning him a yearly salary of 100 florins of gold, a considerable sum, especially for a man who lived in such straitened circumstances as did Boccaccio during almost the whole of his life. He had good reason therefore for wishing to propitiate his fellow-citizens and make them forget anything he had ever said or written which might have offended them; and indeed in his first 'Lecture,' when explaining the title of Dante's book,[1] he does not give it in its full form, as we find it in the letter to Cangrande: 'The Comedy of Dante Allighieri, a Florentine by birth, not by character,' but confines himself to saying 'The Comedy of Dante Allighieri the Florentine,' omitting the 'natione, non moribus,' which would have sounded ill in the ears of his audience. In like

[1] Milanesi, i. p. 83.

manner instead of affirming, as he had done in the Proem of the *Vita*, that ambition had laid hold of every reward of virtue amongst the Florentines, he seeks to win their favour by modestly protesting that to explain a text of such high art he will need the Divine assistance, especially since he has to discourse[1] 'to men of so high understanding and marvellous acuteness as ye gentlemen of Florence do always show yourselves to be.' If therefore he found occasion to mention 'the little treatise' written by him in praise of Dante,[2] one can perfectly understand that he might think it suitable to substitute a recast for the original book, and to suppress the invective against the Florentines.

We may also urge that after Boccaccio's conversion by Gioachino Ciani, which took place in 1361, he may have felt moved to give utterance, even in this biographical tract, to his devout and Catholic sentiments.

But in spite of these plausible arguments I think we must reject the opinion for which they seem to plead. The considerations urged above would lead to the conclusion that the recast of the book dated from Boccaccio's last years, and perhaps was intended as an introduction to the lectures on the *Comedy* which he held in the Church of St. Stefano. Now in the thirty-third of these lectures,[3] after repeating the account of the re-discovery of the first seven cantos as Andrea di Leon Poggi had related it to him, and after telling us how he himself had spoken of it in the *Vita*, he adds that the story was told him again by Dino Perini, an intimate friend of Dante's, in an entirely different way. Then in conclusion he says: 'Now how this thing chanced or may have chanced I shall leave to the judgment of my readers. Let each one suppose what seems to him most true or most probable.' Dino Perini, who boasts of the closest intimacy of friendship with Dante, can hardly have outlived the poet half a century or more. His story

[1] Milan., i. 81. [2] *Ibid.*, i. 89. [3] *Ibid.*, ii. 132.

to Boccaccio must therefore have been told many years before 1373, although after the publication of the *Vita di Dante*, so that we are driven to the conclusion that if the Compendium had been the work of Messer Giovanni he must have been acquainted, when engaged upon it, with Ser Dino's claim to the merit of having discovered the seven cantos. But we see that the author of the recast had no such knowledge, otherwise he could not have given the credit to Andrea Poggi alone with the same assurance as in the original Life.

We might add, as a further argument, that if Boccaccio had believed in the truth of the tales about Dante's amours with Pargoletta or the lady with the goitre, which were certainly current during the poet's life, he would have been sure to find a place for such scandals in his complete *Vita di Dante*, since he expressly taxes him with wantonness.

Finally, if my foreign extraction allowed me to express an opinion on such a point, I should say that the language of the passages peculiar to the Epitomiser strikes me as departing in no small degree from Boccaccio's style.

XI. JOHN OF SERAVALLE?

If the conjecture that the Life of Dante was recast and epitomised by the author himself will not hold, it remains open to inquiry whether any other hypothesis can be advanced and made good. In Paur's work, to which reference has been made more than once, we are told that Emmanuelle Rocco attempted to show that the Epitomiser was probably identical with Giovanni Bertoldi of Serravalle, who annotated the *Divine Comedy*. According to Paur's account, the only argument adduced in support of this conjecture is that both the authors in question tell us that Dante was hard pressed for money when he was in

Paris. But they do this in a very different manner. The Compendium says quite generally: 'When he had crossed the Alps he made his way as best he might to Paris, so that by studying there to the utmost of his power he might restore to philosophy the time which he had robbed from her for other empty cares. He attended lectures therefore on philosophy and theology for a certain space, not without great lack of the things requisite for life.' The Commentator on the other hand only speaks of Dante's inability to meet the very heavy expenses of graduating. 'He was a Bachelor of the University of Paris, where he lectured on the "Sentences" *pro forma magisterii*, lectured on the Bible, answered all the doctors in due form, and did all the acts which need to be done for taking the doctor's degree in Sacred Theology. Nothing remained but the *inceptio* or *conventus*, but for this he lacked the cash. To get it he went back to Florence, a supreme Artist and a finished Theologian.'[1]

As for this matter, without knowing the details mentioned by the Bishop of Fermo, the Epitomiser might find hints enough in the original *Vita* to justify him in saying that Dante could not have attended the classes of the Parisian professors in philosophy and theology 'without great lack of things requisite for life,' for we read (p. 19) that in his unbroken study of the said sciences, the poet had 'given no heed to heat nor cold nor vigils nor fasts nor any other bodily discomfort'; and further on (p. 24), that after leaving Italy and passing the mountains which divide it from the provinces of Gaul he made his way to Paris 'as best he might.'

If a single coincidence were sufficient to enable us to divine the author of a work we should have equal or perhaps better right to identify our Epitomiser with the author of the very short Life of Dante published by

[1] P. 15 of the Prato edition of 1891. For an explanation of the technical terms, cf. Rashdall's *Universities of Europe*, etc., i. 284 *sq.*—ED.

Corbinelli; for these are the only two authorities who endow the lady of the Casentino with a goitre.

If therefore this conjecture will not hold either, we must be content, at any rate for the present, with a *non liquet*.

XII. CONCLUSION

It only remains to add two remarks with respect to the manuscripts of the abbreviated Life. It is well known, partly from the dates assigned to them, partly from the other works which appear with the Epitome in the miscellaneous collections containing it, that all the manuscripts are of the fifteenth century, and, we may add, well advanced in it. Four of them (registered above under Nos. 3, 5, 8, and 9) give it in connection with writings concerning Stefano Porcaro, a circumstance which might possibly furnish some indication as to the origin of the book.

The most important of the manuscripts I take to be the one second on our list, some features of which might lead us to suspect that the abbreviated Life was not carried through at once, but is the result of successive labours, perhaps by different hands. As a specimen I subjoin part of the Proem, placing within brackets the words and the passages which are found in the original but not in the other copies of the Compendium. The asterisks indicate some obvious errors of the amanuensis.

'sono ancora testimonianza [chiara alli presenti uomini]' . . 'ogni Repubbricha *chome due*' . . . 'i quali chon *maturità* affermaua essere il destro* e* non lasciare . . . manchaua [chonuzio[1]] sanza dubio* più* la Rip. zopp. [e però se sciura[2] si pecchasse inammendue quassi certissi auere quella

[1] In the original *Vita*, 'per vizio.'
[2] In the original, 'se per isciagura.'

non potere stare innalchun modo] * ma ssi *[1] [adunque] chossi egregi chome ant. popoli da quella laudeuole sentenza [e apertissimamente uera] * dubita * altra d'una * emorea * statua. . . sichondo i meriti [precedenti] onorauano. . . [Le] pene per[llo] opposito infigendo [date non churo di rachontare. Per * lui quelli * onori e purghazioni] la anssiria la macedonicha [* da grecia *] e ultimamente. . . . Le uestigie * i * quali [in chossi ulti esempli]. . . . possiede l'ambizione. [Per] che [si chome o e ciaschuno altro che chon ochio ragoneuole ghuardare non anza grandissima chonfusione danimo possiamo vedere li maluagi eruersi uomini * agliochi * eccelsi et a sommi vficj et ghiderdonj leuare et buonj schacciare, deprimere, abassare. Delle qualj hose serbi il giudicio di dio choloro il negono che' (*illegible*) il temone di questa naue però chennoi più bassa turba siamo lal fiotto della fortuna, ma non della cholpa parteficie. Et home che n.' (?) 'infinite ingratitudine et disoneste perdonanze, parenti si potessino le predette chose verifichare, per * none * choprire li nostri difetti et per uenire al mio principale intento na sola assaj auere rachontata, nè questa fia pocha e picchola, ichordando] l'esilio [del] chiarissimo uomo, dante allighieri, [al uale anticho cictadino, nè di schuri parenti nato, quanto per irtù e] per iscienza, o per opere laudeuole, condegno di grolioso nore. Intorno alla quale opera' ecc.

[1] Read, 'mossi.'

XI.—DANTE'S REMAINS AT RAVENNA

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 32-42 (1879).]

THE tradition is that after Dante's death his body was deposited by his patron, Guido Novello da Polenta, in a stone sarcophagus in the Franciscan Church (then San Pier Maggiore). Two chapels lie at the western corner of the north side of this church, though not directly communicating with it. The greater of the two, situated west of the other, almost touches the church. It received the name of 'Braccioforte' at an early period. Somewhat further from the church itself, but abutting on the present cloister, lies the smaller 'Capella della Madonna,' east of the Braccioforte and running parallel to it. The space lying between the two chapels and the church has been used as a burial-ground, but the side entrance to the church which at one time led out of it has long been closed. The sarcophagus containing Dante's body now rests in the Capella della Madonna.

But Dante's resting-place has been repeatedly disturbed since 1321. In the first place, the Venetian governor (Pretor) of Ravenna, Bernardo Bembo, father of Cardinal Pietro Bembo, commissioned the famous sculptor Pietro Lombardo in 1483 to adorn the monument with the bas-relief still to be seen. Subsequently the roof of the chapel threatened to fall in, and the monument itself began to suffer; so in the year 1692 the papal legate, Cardinal Domenico Corsi, had the building completely repaired, and put an iron

railing round it. The Franciscan monks (Minorites) looked on this undertaking as an infringement of their rights, and tried to drive the workmen off, so that the city authorities had to send thirty-two, or, according to other accounts, forty, gendarmes to protect them.[1] Finally, in 1780 the chapel was transformed by the Cardinal Legate Valenti Gonzaga, after the designs of Count Cammillo Morigia, into the pretty little temple which is still to be seen.

Doubts were even then current as to whether the sarcophagus really held Dante's bones. The Cardinal accordingly ordered it to be opened, but we only learn, from the historian Cammillo Spreti, that they 'found what was needful to establish the truth.' The apparently intentional ambiguity of these words was rather calculated to strengthen than to destroy the existing doubts, and the story that the sarcophagus was empty continued to gain credence.[2]

In the Jubilee year of 1865 the Ravennese determined to do honour to the little temple surmounting Dante's monument, and also to rebuild the Braccioforte chapel in suitable style. With this object a part of the southern wall of this latter, nearest to the north-west corner of the church (where the Chapel of S. Solimea stands), was pulled down. Just opposite the place at which the men were at work, on the morning of May 27th, they found a built-up doorway in the continuation of the north side-wall of the church. Some of the stones (simply mortared together) projected so

[1] The monks, however, did not let the matter rest here, and in 1693 published in Forlì a *Defensio immunitatis ecclesiasticae, nec non jurium Ecclesiae S. Petri Majoris.* [*A defence of ecclesiastical immunity, and of the rights of the Church of S. Peter the Greater.*]

[2] I take from Giuseppe Riminesi's *Dante Allighieri e Ravenna* and Barlow's (?) *Sixth Centenary Festivals of Dante Alligh.*, p. 69, the notice that a paper from the hand of one Fra Tommaso Marredi was found in a mass-book belonging to the convent, according to which the sarcophagus was opened on August 1st, 1780, on the occasion of the rebuilding of Morigia's temple, and was found empty.

as to hinder the men from handling their tools freely, and the superintendent, Lorenzatti, told the mason Feletti and his man Angelo Dradi to remove the stones. A few blows, and the hammer fell on the wood of a chest, and when they tried to pull the end board out of the wall some human bones fell out with it. On the inner side of the deal lid was written in ink '*Dantis Ossa. Denuper revisa die 3ª Junii* 1677.' Outside the chest was written, by the same hand, on the side, '*Dantis Ossa a me Frē Antonio Sānti hic posita. Anno* 1677. *die* 18 *Octobris.*' Perhaps the first date is that on which the bones were collected and concealed, and the second that on which the chest was walled up.

The bones which had fallen out were now carefully collected, and, together with the chest, were guarded with the utmost care until further steps should be taken; for in order to allay all possible doubt, the authorities at Ravenna asked the Florentine municipality to appoint a commission to take part in the next step, namely, the opening of the stone sarcophagus. Amongst other venerators of Dante who had gathered for the centenary celebrations in Florence was the late Herr Heinrich Brockhaus of Leipzig, and he too seized the opportunity of being present at so remarkable an event. I am happy to be able, by his kindness, to include the portion of his journal describing it:

'The Sindaco of Ravenna sent me an invitation to be present at the opening of the urn containing Dante's remains.

'One would naturally assume that they lay in the monument dedicated to them. In fact the Florentines had recently had the naïveté to suggest that on occasion of the Dante festival, Dante's remains should be brought back to that Florence which had banished Dante himself. Of course they had to be told that their request could not be granted, for, apart from anything else, there would certainly have been a riot in Ravenna if any attempt had been made to deprive her of her chiefest treasure.

'There seems moreover to have been some sort of tradition in Ravenna, to the effect that Dante's remains were not really in

the urn designed for them, but had been removed thence at some time or other, no one knew where. So that there might have been considerable difficulties in the way, even if Ravenna had been willing to hand them over to Florence.

'Then it happened that, a fortnight before the festival, a mason in pulling down a wall near "Dante's tomb," discovered what really were his bones. He struck upon a hollow-sounding wall, and found an inscription to the effect that Dante's remains were there, having been deposited there by a monk towards the close of the seventeenth century. What could have been the motive? Possibly it was feared that the fanaticism of party passions would not have reverenced the remains of a heretic, and that Dante's very bones might be destroyed.

'The discovery naturally caused prodigious excitement; but although it now seemed pretty certain that the real urn could contain nothing—for the newly discovered bones formed almost a complete skeleton,—yet the fact had still to be explicitly proved, in order to establish the genuineness of the discovery.

'Meantime access to the tomb was strictly forbidden. The National Guard stood sentinel over it, and I had to get a special permission from the Sindaco in order to be allowed to look through the window and see the carefully sealed chest of bones under guard there. I was also permitted to inspect the wall where it had been found.

'Ravenna, needless to say, was in a state of the intensest excitement, and the authorities were anxious to carry the matter through as quickly as possible. Besides, the Dante festival proper was fixed for June 24th and June 25th. On Wednesday, June 7th, 1865, then, a number of selected spectators gathered in the very limited space available, to witness this spectacle of the opening of the urn. I had donned a black coat and white tie, but I found little enough of any air of restraint in the company. There was plenty of smoking, and the refreshments provided were freely bespoken.

'There was considerable delay in opening the urn, and although two representatives from Florence, Signors Giuliani and Vanucci, were already in Ravenna, there was a third still expected. I should have found it rather wearisome if my neighbour had not proved to be an exceptionally cultivated Italian gentleman, with whom I had much interesting conversation, learning a great deal about many of the concerns of Italy. At last they had broken through the wall and were ready to open the urn. Suppose they found human remains here too! But

the urn was indeed empty. Only three small bones, missing in the skeleton, were found there, together with a few laurel leaves and a little bone-dust. I myself saw enough to be convinced that there was nothing else in the urn, and there can be no further doubt that the lately discovered bones are really Dante's. Fra Santi had done his work well.

'The affair was rightly considered as of the highest importance in Italy. A telegraphic account of the result was immediately despatched to Florence, and a placard was at once printed and posted. The sculptor Pazzi, a native of Ravenna, who executed the new statue of Dante in the Piazza of Santa Croce in Florence, gave me, with the kindness which invariably distinguishes him, some relics from the urn,—only bone-dust and fragments of laurel leaves, it is true, but I shall be able to make some relic-collector or other extremely happy with them. Doubtless the present sepulchral monument will soon be replaced by a more stately one, to which, let us hope, the whole civilised world will enthusiastically contribute.'

Other spectators, like Herr Brockhaus, may have taken away with them 'some bone-dust and fragments of laurel leaves,' a little of the 'dust which Dante had become,' out of Santi's chest.[1] The President of the commission appointed by the Minister of Public Instruction, Count Giov. Gozzadini of Bologna, may be supposed to have secured so much, though certainly nothing more. But in progress of the festival a report got about among the populace that the Count had taken whole bones, and the skull itself, out of the chest. The uproar grew from minute to minute. The shouting crowds beset the Hotel della Spada d'Oro, demanding that the President's luggage should be searched. He succeeded in reaching the railway station by a back-door and side lane, but the guard was still engaged in examining the tickets when the crowd, who had discovered the escape of their victim, burst into the station. The signal was at once given, and the long row of carriages was steamed out, but, as the door of his compartment was banged to, the Count, who told me the

[1] Or rather the urn; see above.—ED.

tale three years afterwards, got his hand rather seriously hurt.—The skeleton was exhibited soon after, in a glass coffin, and the people could reassure themselves as to its completeness.

With reference to Frate Antonio Santi, it has been ascertained that he was born in 1644. After 1672 he appears as the Chancellor, and after 1700 as Guardian of the Convent, in which office he died in 1703.

Any doubt that might still exist as to the genuineness of the discovery has been entirely set at rest by the researches of Professor Welcker.[1] But the question when and why the poet's remains were taken from the stone urn, put into a simple wooden box, and built in where no one could think of seeking them, is still of interest.

Two theories on this subject have gained currency. Some hold that it was the threat of Cardinal Bertrand (Del Poggetto) to come from Bologna to Ravenna and tear Dante's body from its grave to be burnt as that of a heretic, and strewn to the four winds (1327-1334), which impelled the monks to take what they held so precious from the place where the Cardinal would expect to find it, and to hide it away. According to others the bones were removed two hundred years later, at the time when, in 1519, the leading Florentines (Michael Angelo amongst them) attempted to gain the permission of the then overlord of Ravenna, Pope Leo x., to bring back the poet's bones to Florence.—But, to say nothing of the Cardinal del Poggetto, it seems difficult to believe that throughout the hundred and fifty years which elapsed between the time of Leo x. and that of Fra. Santi, Dante's bones should have remained so intact that the Chancellor of the Convent could recognise them with such certainty, for we hear nothing of any particular precautions being taken during this period.

[1] *Dante Jahrbuch*, i. 35-56.

Perhaps we can find indications more to the purpose in a notice dating from a period much closer to the year 1677. We have already referred to the struggle which took place in 1692 between the Minor Friars and the Cardinal Legate (backed by the city authorities), when the latter restored the memorial chapel. And not only was the ownership of the chapel in dispute about this time, but its spiritual immunities were also called in question. On August 26th, 1694, a certain Giuseppe Morena of Faenza escaped from the city prison. Trusting to the Church's right of asylum, he, and the two jailers who had helped him, sought refuge in the Chapel of the Madonna, in which Dante's tomb stands. But the police pursued them, and tore them forcibly away from the newly erected railing, to which they had clung. Hence arose long and wearisome contests between the temporal and spiritual authorities, which were finally carried to Innocent XII. at Rome. The report sent on August 29th by Archbishop Raimondo Ferretti to the '*Congregazione dell' immunità Ecclesiastica*' is still extant in the archiepiscopal archives, and fragments of it[1] have lately been published by the City Surveyor, Romolo Conti.[2] The archbishop confines himself to showing that the chapel, being an integral part of the convent, and included in its outer wall, must share in its immunity. But the city authorities reply that the chapel has forfeited its spiritual privileges, in that the poet there interred was declared, after his death, to be a heretic, whereupon the monks meet them with the assertion that Dante's bones are neither in the mausoleum nor in the chapel, and appeal for confirmation to an *inscription in the chapel*, which expressly states that they are no longer there. According to a later entry in the same archives,[3]

[1] I am indebted to the goodness of the Consigliere Dr. Sebast. Fusconi of Ravenna for further extracts from this document.

[2] *La Scoperta delle ossa di Dante*; Ravenna, 1865.

[3] From information received from Dr. Fusconi.

dated November 27th, 1694, the above-mentioned 'Congregation' of September 28th decided that Morena and his two companions had really been torn from a place enjoying the Church's right of sanctuary, and must be taken back there. In consideration of all the circumstances, however, the officers of the law were not to be punished.

Now if, in 1694, the monks could appeal to an already existing inscription, according to which Dante's remains were no longer to be found in the chapel, something must previously have convinced them that such an inscription would in some way serve their interests. We can scarcely be far out in guessing that that something was a conflict similar to those of 1692 and 1694. And indeed it might well be that in the seventeenth century, when Chiabrera and Marini had superseded the *Divine Comedy*, it would appear to the worthy monks a matter of more importance to maintain the right of sanctuary throughout all the dependencies of their convent than to be able to boast that they were guardians of the remains of an almost forgotten poet. Besides, they had no intention of getting entirely rid of them; they were only going to remove them from the consecrated place, where they created a scandal.

Possibly we can fix the time of the occurrence still nearer by means of two other dates. According to an entry which Martinetti Cardoni[1] gives from the convent's account-books, three lire was paid in 1648 for plastering[2] the *Capella di Dante*. At this time, then, the inscription to the effect that the poet's remains no longer lay in this chapel cannot have been in existence.—Again, Cammillo Spreti[3] tells us that along the northern wall of the church there used to be a colonnade, running as far as the Capella

[1] *Dante Alighieri in Ravenna* (Rav., 1864), p. 70.

[2] I am indebted to Dr. Herm. Lotze for the information that, according to Morri's *Idiotikon* of the dialect of Romagnola, *salghê* (obviously from *selciare*) means 'to plaster.'

[3] Cardoni, pp. 64 *sq.*

della Madonna, and between its thirty arches there stood a number of sarcophagi (some Roman, and some of later date), amongst them that of Flavia Salutaris; much as the stone sarcophagi of the Malatestas stand on the side-wall of the beautiful Church of San Francesco in Rimini, built by Leon Batista Alberti. But the worthy Franciscans looked on even this much contact with a misbelieving paganism as a desecration of their church, and about 1660 they destroyed the whole portico, as we learn from Padre Giacomo Garzi, who died in 1698. Some of the sarcophagi, presumably those of Christian origin, were carried into the cemetery adjoining the chapels della Madonna and Braccioforte, but most of them simply perished. Now I think it probable that in the course of this general clearance of the stone sarcophagi of San Francesco, Dante's urn may also have been cleansed from its heretical contents, and the perpetration of such an act of faith by an inscription in the chapel would be no more than consistent. At the same time, it might be that some monk who was not an utter stranger to literature preserved sufficient reverence for the poet's name to protect his bones from further desecration. He would then have confided his treasure to Frate Santi, who consigned the bones to the deal chest and re-certified their genuineness (*denuper revisit*), until he was at last able to take it upon himself, thanks to his prominent position in the convent, to build up the chest in the wall adjoining the churchyard, that is to say, in semi-consecrated ground.

XII.—ON THE DATES OF DANTE'S THREE CANTICHE

A LETTER TO DR. ADOLPH WAGNER, JUNE 2ND, 1827

[*Parnasso Italiano*, p. xvi. *Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i, pp. 134-140 (1869).]

THE earliest Commentators, with few exceptions, believe the whole of the *Comedy* to have been composed by Dante in the very year, 1300, in which he professes to have had his vision, or but little later. Recent Commentators all admit a later date, but differ widely in fixing the special epoch. Taeffe and Troja, with a good many others, carry the composition of the first cantos of the *Divine Comedy* back to a time prior to the Jubilee year (1300), declaring that before Dante's exile they were already on the lips of the Florentine people. They suppose the first Cantica to have been completed not later than 1308. Dionisi, on the other hand, maintains that the last touches were not given before 1314. The same authorities are equally at variance as to the *Purgatory*, for Troja assigns the year 1314 for its promulgation, and Dionisi thinks it was not finished till after 1318. With respect to the completion of the *Paradise*, these particular writers happen to be more nearly agreed, for Dionisi assigns it to the early months of 1320, and Troja to the period immediately preceding the author's death; but Pelli and Tiraboschi deviate widely from them, and declare that the whole *Comedy* was completed before the death of Henry VII. Finally, Foscolo struck an idea

quite peculiar to himself, and said that the Divine Poem was a posthumous work, which the author during his life kept profoundly secret, with the exception of a few fragments, even from his closest friends.

When we set about examining how far these opinions rest upon solid foundations, we are forced to confess that, in the absence of information from the author himself, it is impossible to establish the date of every passage in a work which was revised and interpolated again and again before it was published. The conclusion of the *Vita Nuova* being the only passage in which Dante hints at the period at which he conceived the colossal design of the *Comedy*, we have no reason to suppose that he set his hand to the work before 1300.[1] As to the diffusion of the early cantos in Florence, while Dante was still living, our only authority is Sacchetti in the 114th and 115th Novels; and the contents of the cantos themselves contradict it, for their fundamental ideas would surely have been very different but for the author's exile; and a further difficulty is found in the extreme bitterness with which he attacks the reputation of the Florentines from the sixth canto onwards; nor can we accept such stories on the authority of a novelist born long after Dante, who after all does not specify the *Comedy*, but only says 'Dante's book,' which might apply to the Canzoni or other poems. A further contradiction of the story might be found in Boccaccio's statement that the first seven cantos were left in outline when Dante fled from Florence, not even the most brilliant scholars or closest friends of Dante having apparently heard anything of them till Leone Poggi discovered them. But we cannot insist on this, since there is good reason to doubt the accuracy of the story itself.

In support of the opinion that the *Inferno* cannot have been published later than 1308, the only proof adduced is

[1] Compare above, pp. 66, 67, note.—ED.

the alleged silence of the poem concerning all occurrences later than that year. We should observe, however, that Dino Compagni, a writer who delights in terse sayings, and who wrote in 1312, makes no reference to the *Divine Comedy*, which would have supplied him so well with reproaches against the Florentines wherewith to 'clothe his wrath in beauty.'[1] We should also observe, as Torelli has excellently pointed out, that no landslip in the valley of the Adige better conforms to the description given us by Dante in the *Inferno*, xii. 6, than the fall which took place in 1310.[2] Again, in another passage of the same Cantica (xxi. 41), there seems to be a reference to an event as late as the end of 1313.[3] But since these arguments may appear more or less ambiguous, I will add another which I take to be decisive. In Canto xix. 79 we read that Clement v. is not destined to rule the Church as long as nineteen years.[4] Now it will surely be admitted that when he made this assertion Dante knew the date of Clement's death, which took place on the 20th April 1314. If not, we must suppose that Dante had the spirit of prophecy—an alterna-

[1] Another argument may be added. Ciacco says (*Inf.* vi. 68) that 'three suns' after the expulsion of the Neri (Summer 1300) the 'savage party' will fall. This can only refer to Fulcieri de' Calboli's period of office as Podestà (*Purg.* xiv. 58) and to the attempt on Puliciano (Summer 1303). Now, the five years up to 1308 do not seem enough to justify the poet in saying that the Blacks will 'hold their heads on high *long season*, crushing down the others under heavy weights, however they wail and rage thereat.'—1869.

[2] I believe I must withdraw this argument as unsound. The events mentioned in the *Divine Comedy*, when not put into the form of prophecy, are anterior to the date of the vision. And besides, the Slavino di Marco (another landslip) goes back to the ninth century.—1869.

[3] Albertino Mussato, cited by the editors of the *Ancora*.—1869.

[4] Nicolas III. died 23rd August 1280, so that his feet had been roasting for nineteen years and eight months at the time of Dante's vision. Bonifazio VIII. died 7th October 1303. Taking this as the moment at which Nicolas III. 'plunged lower down' and Boniface came to take his place, the latter would have to 'stay fixed with feet red glowing' until the death of Clement V., which took place, as already said, on the 20th April 1314.—1869.

tive which Repetti, in an article printed a few months ago in contravention of my opinion,[1] seems willing to accept. We are thus brought down to 1314, and this cannot be far from the date at which Dante promulgated the *Inferno*; for the author himself, in the first of his Latin eclogues, supposed to have been written about 1319, speaks of the *Inferno* as already finished; and other authors, too, henceforth frequently refer to episodes of the *Inferno*. The notorious Cecco d'Ascoli, who was burned alive at Florence in 1327, and who wrote his *Acerba* during Dante's life,[2] discusses and condemns almost all the most striking passages of the *Inferno*; and about the same time Passera della Gherminella di Lucca, in a sonnet published by Crescimbeni (*Storia della volg. poesia*, vol. iii. p. 116), says:

'In valour thou art no old Alard (*Inf.* xxviii. 18), nor County Guy of Monte Feltro (*Inf.* xxvii.), nor Uguccion of Faggiuola, nor Mainardo (*Inf.* xxvii. 50). By the Gospels! thy life is not worth a pewter [*peltro*] penny (*Inf.* i. 103), for you are a greater coward than a hare in face of a greyhound [*veltro*]' (*Inf.* i. 101).

Cino of Pistoja also alludes to the celebrated episode of Francesca da Rimini in his Sonnet 111, written during the life of Selvaggia (who died before 1321, according to Ciampi.[3] (See his *Vita di M. Cino*, third edition, p. 44.)

'Tell her my sad heart knows this only comfort: it is of the course that nature holds in man, that *Love suffereth not any loved one to escape from loving*.'

[1] Indicated in the *Antologia di Firenze*, lxix., September 1826, p. 57. —1869.

[2] We may infer this from several passages of the *Acerba*, but particularly the following: 'Now, Dante, consider whether any other proof can be produced to refute this'; and, 'Against this I declare what my opinion is, and support it with philosophical arguments. Then if Dante can solve them, I am satisfied.'

[3] And after 1313. Ciampi can find no more precise indications as to the period of her death.—1869.

Similar allusions to Dante are found in the History of Giov. Villani, viii. 23, xi. 20, etc.

[The weightiest argument making for the date we have proposed only appeals to those who believe that the *Veltro* of the first canto is Cangrande della Scala. Now although attempts have been made in our time with much ingenuity and historical learning to substitute Uguccione della Faggiuola, or Pope Benedict XI., or some other personage (whether historical or prophetically anticipated), for Cangrande, yet the old opinion, which has prevailed for three centuries, is still (and, if I am not mistaken, rightly) accepted by the great majority of the students of Dante. Now by 1308 Cangrande, who had not yet grown his beard, could not have done anything to merit a prophecy of such scope as that concerning the *Veltro*. Again, as long as his brother Albuino (who died October 28th, 1311) was still living, though he was associated with him in the Lordship, he could not have had any opportunity of drawing all the hopes of the Ghibelline party to himself, and after Henry VII. had descended from Mount Cenis (October 24th, 1310) or rather from the moment when he had determined to cross the Alps (September 1309), the Italian Ghibellines, made 'humble' by so many disasters, must have looked for their 'salvation' to no other than the Emperor himself, and not to any municipal potentate. So it was not until after the death of the 'lofty Henry' (August 24th, 1313), when they saw the hopes they had placed in him crushed, that the poet could have substituted his Vicar for the deceased hero himself, and declared him to be the Veltro 'who shall be the salvation of that humbled Italy.'][1]

The *Purgatory* contains a smaller number of prophecies, and its date is therefore less certain; but in one of the early cantos (vii. 96) it is said that Henry will come to the succour of Italy too late, and this justifies us in supposing

[1] Author's addition of 1869.

that this canto was not begun till after 1313. Still more decisive is the passage which predicts that the Italian Guelfs, and the French as well, will be crushed by a Leader who is obscurely hinted at (xxxiii. 43). Such a title and such a hope could only apply to one who was the head of all the Ghibellines of Italy; and such the Scaliger became by his nomination at Soncino on the 16th December 1318. No municipal potentate can be intended here, as the supporters of della Faggiuola's claims suppose. The only argument that can be brought in opposition rests on the assertion of Boccacci and others that the *Purgatory* was dedicated to Maroello Malaspina (the third of that name), who died in 1316. But since I am not alone in doubting the truth of the fact, which Boccacci himself gives as uncertain (*Antologia di Firenze*, 1827, No. lxxiv, pp. 17, 18), and since I am inclined to think that this very Cantica contains a reference to the death of Maroello, I cannot say that the objection gives me much uneasiness. Is it not a fact that the praises given to Alagia (xix. 142), without a word about her husband, seem to imply that the latter was already dead when the poet composed the verses in question? But here we must stop. Giovanni di Virgilio in his *Carmen* (line 18) alludes to a passage in the *Purgatory* (*Purg.* xxi.); and since his poem, as already said, is assigned to 1319, we must hold that the end of 1318 or the beginning of 1319 is the date of the completion of the *Purgatory*.

Finally, as to the *Paradise*. Dionisi's argument from the fact of Dante's never having returned to Verona, after his short stay there at the beginning of 1320, appears to have little relevance. I believe I have shown elsewhere[1] that the dedication to Cangrande is posthumous, and I do not see why we are not to accept Boccacci's statement that the

[1] In my edition of Dante's Epistles, p. 72 (cf. Torri's edition, p. 103). —1869.

last thirteen cantos were not found till after the author's death. We must suppose, however, that some whiff of the *Paradise*, though not the bulk of the poem itself, had got abroad even during Dante's life, for Cecco D'Ascoli, mentioned above, says in the beginning of the *Acerba*:

'Of which [heaven] that Florentine whom Beatrice conducted there, hath already treated.'

This is a further proof of the unsoundness of Foscolo's opinion above referred to. And to this we may add Cino's Canzone (No. 20), composed immediately on receiving the news of Dante's death, which contains obvious references to the *Inferno* (xv. 72). Finally I see that Fra Guido da Pisa, another contemporary of Dante's, cites the *Divine Comedy* more frequently than any other book.

XIII.—THE TWO EARLIEST COMMENTATORS ON THE DIVINE COMEDY

[*Jahrbücher der Literatur* (1828, vol. iv.). *Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i. pp. 354-398 (1869).]

THE conviction that the deeper significance of the *Divine Comedy* is missed by the modern Commentators drove me to inquire whether the early Annotators had comprehended the poet's meaning any better. And I soon found that the religious basis of the whole poem, and the allegorical significance of many of the details, had been recognised by them up to the sixteenth century, and even to some extent still later. It was only the materialistic philosophy of these latter days which was incapable of recognising the religious idea under its artificial veil, and therefore attempted to replace it by considerations and aims of a worldly nature. This naturally led to the thought that the true significance of the poem might perhaps have been communicated by the poet himself, and then handed down by tradition. This roused a keen desire for a nearer acquaintance with the earlier Commentators, and more especially those who might possibly or probably have come into personal relations with the poet. So during a hasty journey in which I revisited Northern Italy last year (1826) I seized every opportunity of tracking up these early Commentators, and in the midst of multifarious other pursuits I examined some 150 MS. volumes of Commentaries, in the course of less than three months. These figures make it quite unneces-

sary to add that it was out of the question to work through the volumes and make excerpts. My object was limited to lightening the future labours of others in bringing order into this vast mass of material, this monument of the incredible industry devoted to the *Divine Comedy*, reducing the number of 'anonymi,' and forming at least some conclusions concerning their several values. How far I have been successful I shall hope shortly to enable the reader to judge. At present I will only say that I found nothing to support the theory of a traditional interpretation of details traceable to data supplied by the poet himself. Now and then he may have given utterance to ideas concerning the significance of the poem as a whole, but with one exception, which will be dealt with presently, there are no traces of his having himself expounded the meaning of any of the harder passages in conversation. And indeed such a course would have ill accorded with the poet's haughty and reserved nature. At the same time, the age which had seen the birth of the poem was, in greater or less degree, that of the Commentators themselves. The religious sentiments and imagery of which Dante had availed himself were familiar to his exponents also; the events to which he referred were still fresh in their memories; the forms of the language and the significance of the words were still fresh in their minds; and their labour was inspired by the first outburst of enthusiasm which the *Comedy* aroused among those of like mind with the poet. When we add to this the beauty and purity of the language in which the Italian writers express themselves, we shall see why the study of these old Commentators affords so much more pleasure than that of the modern works in the same field, so numerous in our day. It cannot be denied that the historical insight of Benvenuto da Imola, the theological profundity of Petrus Dantis, the beautiful diction and instructive fulness of the 'Anonimo' of the Riccardian MS.

1016,[1] and the comprehensive thoroughness of the invaluable Buti, far outweigh the bigoted zeal of Venturi, the endless chatter of the worthy Lombardi, and the vulgarities and grammatical subtleties of Biagioli, and, moreover, with the exception of a few discoveries of later times (*e.g.* the signification of the *Veltro*), these excellent forefathers uttered and defended wellnigh all the errors and all the truths which our modern interpreters believe themselves to have discovered, and often supported them with better arguments.

These older Commentators have their special excellences and defects, according to the time in which they lived. The earliest, amongst whom I reckon all who wrote before the year 1350, have the advantage of direct contact with the poet's age, and free unprejudiced views. On the other hand, they are dealing with matter as yet new, and are thrown upon their own limited resources, and exposed to all kinds of individual errors. Their successors make use of the knowledge and opinions of their predecessors, and balance their contradictory opinions against each other, but they soon lose all freedom of view under the mass of material which overwhelms them. When we put them thus side by side the early Commentaries will be seen to have the best of it, and perhaps this is why admirers of our poet so frequently inquire particularly after the *earliest* of his Commentators.

Well, nearly three hundred years ago (1550) Giorgio Vasari, the biographer of the Artists (Milan ed. 1807, ii. 161, Sienese ed., i. 243), mentions an expounder of the *Divine Comedy* who wrote in the year 1334, twelve or thirteen years, that is, after the poet's death.[2] Twenty-two

[1] Pietro Fanfani has lately (1866) published the Commentary on the *Inferno* contained in this MS.—1869. [The *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* followed in 1868 and 1874.—ED.]

[2] Compare Baldinucci, in the *Apologia*, etc., appended to the Life of

years later he was more carefully examined by the 'Deputati' directed by the Grand Duke Cosimo to correct the text of the *Decameron*. They drew, if I have counted correctly, eighteen philological examples for their celebrated notes from this source. In their preface they award him the greatest praise, not merely as an expounder, but as a model of style, and they also refer to his personal acquaintance with the poet, and call him *par excellence* the *early* or the *good* Commentator.[1] After another forty years, in 1612, the first edition of the *Vocabolario della Crusca* appeared, containing a large number of illustrative examples taken from this Commentary, which is here designated *l' Ottimo*. In the subsequent editions the number of quotations increased so greatly that it now contains upwards of 1600 examples taken from this Commentary. [Pompeo Venturi also refers incidentally (e.g. *Purg.* vi. 94) to the *Ottimo* in his Commentary of 1732.] In 1790 the late Canonico, Count Jacopo Dionisi,[2] carefully examined the *Ottimo* (as we shall continue to call it, though Dionisi refers to it as the *Anonimo*), and having devoted several months in the preceding year to studying the

Cimabue. Collected edition of Baldinucci's works. Milan, 1808-12, vol. iv. p. 31.

[1] 'Of incomparably greater importance, both linguistically and for the information it contains, and superior in the value of its notices of many special features of the times, is a Commentary on Dante by one whose name we have been unable to discover, in spite of all our pains. We have called him sometimes the "Good" and sometimes the "Early" Commentator. He is not Benvenuto da Imola, although the latter has derived much from him and (to give it its right name) copied much also. We are assured that they are not identical by the diversities which distinguish them in many passages, as well as by Benvenuto's general inferiority in philosophical and theological matters. The language is that of about 330 [*i.e.* 1330], that is to say Dante's last period; and in truth our Commentator was a contemporary, and perhaps a friend of the poet's, for in commenting on the passage *Those citizens who afterwards rebuilt it*, etc., he tells us that he questioned Dante about it, and he then gives us in detail the whole story of the statue of Mars and the fables of the ancient Florentines which he had drawn from him in reply.'—(P. 28, Fanfani's ed., 1857.)

[2] The profoundest student of Dante produced by the last century.

Florentine MSS. in conjunction with Perazzini,[1] reports on it in the fifth number of his *Aneddoti*. Much of his material has been incorporated by Renzi, Marini, and Muzzi, in their excellent *dell' Ancora* edition of Dante (Florence, 1819),[2] which is only too little known. In 1826 Professor Torri of Pisa promised us a complete edition of this Commentary,[3] and he is to receive the support of several eminent Italian scholars.

It is a remarkable fact, however, that several writers have doubted the separate existence of this Commentary, and have held it to be identical with that generally associated with the name of Jacopo della Lana. Salviati,[4]

[1] I am indebted for the very valuable present of the complete series of Dionisi's *Aneddoti*, together with Perazzini's *Correctiones et Explicationes*, to the kindly bard of rural life, the noble Marquis Ippolito Pindemonti. Both works are rare, and as mines of Dante-information are very far from being appreciated or used as they ought to be.

[2] Pocket edition reprinted in Prato, 1822.

[3] It appeared in full in 1827-29, Capurro, Pisa.—1869.

[4] *Avvertimenti della lengua* in the first edition, mentioned above (Venezia, 1584), tom. i. p. 114: 'Amongst the authors of this period important from a linguistic point of view, we may include the Commentator on Dante in the vernacular, which the men of '73 [*i.e.* the "Deputati," see last page.—ED.] sometimes called the "Good" and sometimes the "Early" in their work. He was a certain Messere Jacopo della Lana, a citizen of Bologna, not Alberigo di Rosate of Bergamo, a celebrated Doctor of Laws, as those excellent scholars seem sometimes to believe (?). Into this error they were led by a very respectable authority, namely the Abate Tritemio, who says, in his catalogue of writers, that this Alberigo, amongst his other works, left comments on the poem of Dante, but without telling us whether he had written them or only translated them into Latin. The fact, however, is beyond question, for the said Alberigo's Latin Commentary, translated from the vernacular, is still in existence, and Pinello has a MS. copy of it of considerable antiquity and very well corrected,' etc.—P. 115: 'Afterwards, in the year 1478, there was printed at Milan, in large folio, another Commentary on Dante, also in the vernacular; it copies Jacopo della Lana to a great extent, but is linguistically inferior, and often inverts and changes the order of the words, while constantly introducing scraps and patches of other Commentaries,' etc.—P. 116: 'As to the language of the said vernacular Commentary, we have a lower opinion of it than it seems the men of '73 had, since in our opinion it often smacks more of the Latin (so to speak) than other books of the same period;

one of the most eminent contributors to the *Vocabolario della Crusca*, and Pinelli,[1] regarded this identity as established. The authors of the notes to the *tavola delle abbreviature* to the Dictionary were doubtful;[2] Dionisi[3] and Rezzi[4] considered them to be different, although admitting a remarkable agreement between the two. It is the object of this essay to settle this question once for all, and accurately determine the relation of the two works one to another.

I shall reserve a more detailed literary treatment till further on in this essay, and will only explain at present that the quotations from Jacopo della Lana are taken from a Rehdiger MS. in Breslau (which, by the courtesy of the municipal authorities, I have been allowed to have in my

but considering the subject and the author, this is easy to excuse. And, for all we have said, we think that, when read with the poem, it may be of no small value to the usage of our language.'

[1] In Fantuzzi, *Scrittori Bolognesi*, vol. v. p. 18.—[Portirelli, too, in his edition of the *Divina Commedia* (1804), p. xix, has no doubt as to the identity of the two.—1869.]

[2] P. 262, note 73 of the last volume of the Venice (Pitter) edition of 1763: 'The "Deputati" in the proem to their Annotations on the *Decameron* sometimes called him the "Good" and sometimes the "Early" Commentator; and from two passages which indicate that he began to write his Commentary in 1333, they conjecture that he was a contemporary and perhaps a friend of Dante. Perhaps the text before them was not the same that may now be seen in the Laurentian Library, for they say that the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* are written in one hand and the *Paradiso* in another; whereas the Laurentian MS. is all written by the same hand, although sometimes carelessly. *L'Infarinato* believes that the author of this Commentary was Jacopo della Lana, a citizen of Bologna, and does not altogether agree with the "Deputati" in the estimate they formed of its merits. But perhaps Jacopo della Lana's Commentary is different from that of the Laurentian MS., a point which might be cleared up by an inspection of the texts of Pinelli and of Contarini, which *L'Infarinato* had seen.—[In the fifth edition of the *Vocabolario*, begun in 1843, but only carried as far as *Affitto*, this note is corrected on p. 60 of the *Tavola*. The remodelled edition that has been appearing since 1863 contains a brief but correct notice of the *Ottimo* on p. lxxiv.—1869.]

[3] *Op. cit.*, cap. 17.

[4] *Lettera a Giov. Rosini sopra i MSS. Barberiniani comenti alla Div. Com. di Dante* (Roma, 1826), pp. 20 *sq.*

own house for a considerable period) and from the rare Venetian edition of Vindelino da Spira, a fine copy of which I was fortunate enough to obtain from Signor Dumolard of Milan, the bookseller.[1] The *Ottimo* is quoted from the advance sheets of the new Pisa edition, for twenty-seven of which (up to *Inf.* xxv. 66) I am indebted to the great kindness of my honoured friend, Professor Rosini.

I must further point out that in all these and similar cases it is by no means sufficient for the determination and identification of a work simply to compare the beginning and the end, as even the best books on the subject recommend.[2] For one thing, MSS. are particularly subject to the danger of losing their beginning and end, so as to afford no material for such a method. Besides this, the ill-omened zeal and industry of the possessor of a MS., either original or copied, often led him, especially at the beginning, to interpolate all kinds of extraneous matter, thereby concealing the true character of the Commentary. The Commentator himself, or his copyist, frequently takes over annotations from quite another source. Sometimes we find that the beginning has been worked up afresh, in order to make the work appear like a fresh Commentary. We cannot be sure of our results, then, unless we compare whole sections, and this I confess I have not always been able to do in the case of the other Commentaries mentioned above.

The wide difference of opinion as to the connection between the *Ottimo* and Jacopo della Lana would be most simply explained by the discovery that here, as in many

[1] Since this was written Professor Luciano Scarabelli has twice edited Della Lana's Commentary, publishing it at Milan, 1865, in folio, and at Bologna, in octavo, 1866. Cf. *Jahrb. d. Deutsch. Dante-Gesellsch.*, i. 279 *sq.*—1869.

[2] Ebert, *Zur Handschriftenkunde*, i. pp. 148, 180. Cf., however, Rezzi, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

similar cases, the disputants really had quite different works before them to which the same name had been arbitrarily given. Our first inquiry then must be whether it was the same work, to which all the writers mentioned above referred as the *Ottimo*.

To begin with the *Deputati*:—Several of the small number of their citations are of so general a character as not to be easily identified (see pp. 89, 173, and 197 of Fanfani's edition, 1857), and of the remaining fifteen, only four come within the limits of that portion of the work to which at present I have access.[1] One of these (p. 67—*Inf.* vi. 52) may be found in the printed *Ottimo*, though with considerable variants. One (p. 64—*Inf.* xx. 116) is not to be found at all in the *Ottimo*, but stands word for word [?] in Jacopo della Lana; and I have searched both Commentaries in vain for two more (p. 67—*Inf.* xvi. 70; and p. 218—*Inf.* ii.). Finally, two of the eleven passages that remain (pp. 178 and 226) correspond so closely with della Lana (see *Purg.* xxx. 43 and *Inf.* xix. 52), that they cannot have been taken from any one but him.[3] It would seem then that the *Deputati* were acquainted with the true *Ottimo*, but by no means always distinguished him from Jacopo della Lana, or (presumably) from other Commentators either. This would explain simply enough how Pinelli came to refer their quotations to Jacopo instead of to the *Ottimo*.

As to the compilers of the *Vocabolario della Crusca*, I should not be in a position to form a judgment if it had not

[1] Since these twenty-seven sheets furnish adequate material, I have not thought it necessary to extend this toilsome process over the whole of the Commentary, which has now long been in print. This note applies to all the rest of this essay.—1869.

[2] This is too strongly expressed. It is possible that the reference may be to the *Ottimo* on *Inf.* xxxii. 94.—1869.

[3] The other passages are rightly assigned to the *Ottimo*. They are as follows: p. 46 = *Par.* xv. 109; p. 48 = *Par.* iii. 25 and xvi. 115; p. 67 = *Purg.* xvi. 46; p. 114 = *Par.* ix. 94; p. 157 = *Inf.* xix. 49; p. 236 = *Par.* ix. 55; p. 244 = *Purg.* xx. 68.—1869.

been for the unparalleled kindness of the Nestor of Italian writers, Professor Chevalier Daniel Francesconi of Padua. He actually prepared with his own hand a list of words (dated Nov. 25th, 1826) quoted from the *Ottimo*, amounting in all to 1600. Since it is extracted from a larger unprinted work, I here subjoin the full title of the MS. sent me: 'Index of the Words for which the fourth and last original edition of the *Vocabolario della Crusca* cites the *Comment* or *Commentator* of Dante, extracted from the Index made in like fashion for all the *Testi di lingua* [authorities for language], by the present Patrician of Venice, Alvise Mocenigo, son of the late Chevalier Alvise, son of the late Doge.'[1] I have not had time to compare all the words given, but I have carefully looked up the 369 which come under the first three letters of the alphabet, that is to say, between a fourth and a fifth of the whole. Of these again I could only make use of such as came within the first five-and-twenty cantos of the *Inferno*, which was as far as my sheets extended. I have found 136 of them, though sometimes with variants, in the printed *Ottimo*. Six more passages (under *applicare*, *assentire*, *avarizia* first example, *battezzatore*, *capo* (*Inf.* xii. 11 [?]) and *crescere*) I have not as yet succeeded in finding in the printed work, and the character of some of them leads me to think that they must have been taken from some other exposition of the *Divine Comedy*, though I cannot identify it. Two passages not found in the *Ottimo* (under *Acciajuolo* and *Cancelliere*) appear word for word in Jacopo della Lana, while for some inexplicable reason one (under *Capiglia*) actually comes from Boccaccio's unfinished Commentary.[2] Finally, some

[1] At the end of each of his three volumes Torri gives a similar collection of the references to the printed *Ottimo* prepared by Luigi Muzzi and Paolo Zanotti, but it is far less complete.—1869.

[2] On the other hand, under *Illustrissimo*, a passage is given as from Buti's Commentary, which is really found not there but in the *Ottimo* on *Inf.* iv. 130 (p. 52).—1869. [Rightly assigned in the 1729, etc. ed.—ED.]

passages are referred to in quite general terms that have baffled my attempts at identification; and indeed some of those that I have succeeded in tracking are cited very vaguely, or even incorrectly. All this makes it clear that in the main the authors of the *Vocabolario* understood by the *Ottimo* the Commentary which is now being printed; but they were not so consistent in the matter as to preclude the occasional confusion of della Lana or some other Commentary with the *Ottimo*.—I may remark in passing, that after the fashion of other similar works, the *Crusca* lays disproportionate stress on the beginning of the work. Two-fifths of the examples, at any rate under the first three letters of the alphabet, are taken from a portion of the Commentary that only covers three-thirteenths of the work.

It is obvious from what Salviati says that he mistook Jacopo della Lana for the *Ottimo*, and did not know the latter at all.

Dionisi, the *dell' Ancora* editors, and Torri, all of them used the same MS., and it was also known at any rate to the later editors of the *Crusca*. But as far as Dionisi is concerned, we must note that his comparisons of the *Ottimo* and della Lana lose much of their value from the fact that he took Nidobeato's edition (Milan, 1478) to be an uncontaminated reproduction of Jacopo della Lana's Commentary, whereas Terzago had as a fact altered and abbreviated the original Commentary to a very large extent, and had now and again made important additions to it.

And now at last we are in a position to ask and answer the question how it comes that even those writers who made proper use of the names determined above could still be in doubt or confusion as to the relation of the two Commentators, the one to the other. I will for the present put aside all reference to the beginnings and endings of the manuscripts—which however have been singularly

fertile in confusion in this very instance,—and will keep to the body of the Commentaries, in order to arrive at a definite conclusion as soon as possible. To begin with, then, we are immediately struck by the fact that we sometimes find the annotations on a particular passage corresponding almost word for word in the two Commentaries, as in the case of the two last notes to the fourth Canto, the notes to vi. 7 and 13, and innumerable others, while the introductions to the separate Cantos which both Commentaries give us in addition to the notes on special passages, almost always closely correspond. Not only is the connection of ideas the same, and the language often identical line after line, but the very same authorities are cited in the same way. Almost any Canto would serve as an example of this, and as it will be useful to our further investigations to note it, I choose the first which comes to hand, namely, the fourteenth.

Ottimo.

. . . And here it must be questioned whether a man can hold God in hatred? e And *first* it is argued and said that he cannot, and it is proved thus: Dionysius in the book of the Divine names saith: The first and supreme good and the supreme beauty is loveable by all: God is the supreme good and the primal and supreme beauty; therefore he may not be hated of any.

Further it is written in Esdras: All things call upon the truth and are blessed in her works: God is this truth;

Jac. della Lana.[1]

Concerning the which matter it may be questioned whether any man may have hatred to God? And it is argued that he cannot, *first*: since S. Dionysius saith in the fourth book '*De divinis nominibus*': Omnibus amabile et diligibile est primum bonum et pulcrum: God is that goodness and beauty, therefore God may not be hated of any.

Further, as appeareth in the Apocrypha of Esdras, which saith: Omnia invocant veritatem, et benignantur in operi-

[1] Similar parallel passages will be found in Palermo's *I Manoscr. della Palatina*, vol. i. pp. 530-532.—1869.

Ottimo.

therefore God is loved of all, and in consequence may not be hated of any.

Concerning the which question, it is to be known that hatred is a movement of the appetite which descendeth from some apprehension or act of knowing, the which, as directed toward God, may be after two fashions. The one fashion of knowing and apprehending God is by his essence, the which is the goodness of God; and after this fashion God may not be hated of any, inasmuch as he hath in himself the norm of good, and such goodness may not be hated.

The other fashion is through his effects, by the which visible effects the invisible attributes of God may be known. And these effects may be considered after two fashions: the one fashion is when the human will is not repugnant to the effects of God, as in the case of life in a man, for the human will is not repugnant to the divine will in this.

The other fashion is when the aforesaid effects are repugnant to the human will, the which is averse and counter to reason, as when a man receiveth from God punishment for some sin he hath committed, or is constrained by the divine law not to enter upon some delight;

Jac. della Lana.

bus ejus: God is this truth, therefore God is loved of every man, and *per consequens* may not be hated of any.

Concerning the which question, it is to be known that hatred is a movement of the appetite, which appetite descendeth from some apprehension or act of knowing, the which apprehension may be, as to God, after two fashions. The one fashion is to know and apprehend God by his essence, the which essence is the goodness of God, and may not be hated of any, inasmuch as it is of the norm of good and therefore may not be hated.

The other fashion of apprehending may be by his effects, by which visible effects the invisible attributes of God may be known. And these effects may be considered after two fashions: the one, in such cases as life, understanding, love, may not be counter to the will of man; which, it is certain, hath these characteristics from God, so that after this fashion it is impossible to hate God.

The other fashion is when the effects of God are repugnant and contrary to the human will, which is averse and counter to reason, as when, because of some sin, he receiveth from God punishment, or is constrained by divine law not to enter upon some delight.

Ottimo.

and after this fashion man may hold God in hatred even as those of whom there is speech in this passage.

And the answer to the counter argument, which is expressed generally, is that it is they who see God by his essence who may not hate him.

Jac. della Lana.

And therefore whosoever is enwrapped in this last fashion, may well have hatred to God, and of such are they of whom the present chapter maketh mention.

The *first* argument, which is expressed in general, is thus solved: that they who see God by his essence, that is to say the Saints, may not hate God. But it doth not follow that they who see not[1] God by his essence may not hate him. The *second* argument is understood of those who have natural and right will and appetite; those who have it perverted may have God in hatred, because rational effects are displeasing to them.

But in spite of this agreement the two Commentaries, as the most cursory comparison will show, are essentially different, not only in the matter of a note here and there, but in their whole character. To begin with, the *Ottimo* is distinguished by a number of passages which fix the date of composition in 1333 or 1334. As yet I have not found the date of February 28th, 1333, in any early MS. It is inserted in the Venetian MS. (San Marco, 55) under the preface (*Poichè l'autore*) of the *Paradiso*, by some later hand, I imagine by the celebrated Pinelli. A note to *Inf.* xix. 115 gives the date of 17th March 1333 [=1334]. In *Par.* xii. 79 the same year is alluded to as already passed, and a note to *Inf.* xiii. 144 gives the year 1334 as current (for the clerical error 1323 is only found in the one MS. on which the printed *Ottimo* is based). Finally, a note to *Par.* xix. 124 (cited by the *Ancora* editors of the *Comedy*) shows that the

[1] For *coloro che non vedono* Scarabelli has *coloro che vedono* [1866. Correct in the 1865 ed.—ED.], which is nonsense.—1869.

Commentator wrote before 1346.[1] It is only by an error, as Dionisi (*Aneddotti*, v. p. 87) has already pointed out, that the year 1351 appears as already passed in *Purg.* xxiii. 102. I have not compared any other MSS. for this passage, but it is obvious that we must correct the date by Villani (ix. 245) to 1324.[2] Now, so far as I have read him, there is no such definite indication of the date of composition to be found in della Lana. There are also two passages in which the *Ottimo* refers to remarks which he himself heard from Dante's lips. The one (xiii. 144) contains the saga concerning the destruction and rebuilding of Florence, the other (x. 85) records Dante's well-known saying that he never said that which he had not set out to say for the sake of rhyme. In Jacopo della Lana there is no trace of a similar relation. The *Ottimo* is well acquainted with Dante's other works, and in the sheets lying before me are two passages transcribed from the *Convivio* so faithfully as to be valuable in correcting the text of the latter (on *Inf.* vii. 77 and ix. 91), while there is a third passage given in other MSS. to which I shall refer presently. Compare also the *Ottimo* on *Par.* xxviii. 72 [Torri's edition]. He also refers correctly to the *Vita Nuova* in the note to *Purg.* xxx. 115, and to a Canzone in the note to *Par.* viii. 31.[3]

Jacopo della Lana shows an incredible ignorance of almost all matters connected with Dante's circumstances and with his other writings. Judging by the passage in

[1] He speaks of King John of Bohemia, who fell at Crecy, as still living.—1869.

[2] See below, pp. 362 *sq.*—ED.

[3] We may further note the quotation of the third Canzone of the *Vita Nuova*, '*Gli occhi dolenti per pietà del cuore*,' and the third Ballad, '*Io mi son pargoletta bella e nuova*,' in the *Chiosa generale* to *Purg.* xxx., the (fifth) Canzone, '*Io sento sì d'Amor la gran possanza*,' and the (fourth), '*Le dolci rime d'Amor ch'io solia*,' in the notes to lines 37 and 13 of the same canto, as well as the (eighth) sonnet, '*Per quella via che la bellezza corre*,' on *Purg.* xxxi. 55. It is also worth noting that the *Ottimo* knows the poems of Buonagiunta of Lucca (*Purg.* xxiv. 34), of Cino of Pistoja (*Purg.* xxx. 121), and of Folquet of Marseilles (*Par.* ix. 94).—1869.

which he comments on the line of the *Paradiso* just referred to, he must have been entirely unacquainted with the *Convivio*, so utterly does his explanation of the canzone referred to in the passage differ from Dante's own in the *Convivio*.

'Here you are to know that the author, besides this *Comedy*, made many other things in rhyme, both *suoni* and *sonetti*, *canzoni* and *canzoni distese*, and amongst the rest, wishing to touch on something of concupiscent love, poetically inventing the opinion of which mention is made in the beginning of the present chapter, he began and said: "Ye who by understanding move the third heaven."'

And again, he often speaks of Dante's times as though they were remote. For example, on *Purg.* xi. 95:

'In the author's time another whose name was Giotto was renowned, and of this Cimabue nought more was said.'[1]

(Compare further the story of Henry VII. and Cangrande on *Par.* xvii.)

I have only noted one passage which contains a special and important detail concerning Dante, namely: 'Dante signed himself a Florentine by birth, not by character' (on *Inf.* xv. 69).[2] On the other hand, apart from general historical errors, the following note to *Par.* xxv. must be regarded as incorrect in relation to Dante himself, at any rate in the form of expression:

'In times past there was a house in Florence, named the Francesi, which received an outrage from the Abbati, and some of them were slain. These Francesi, considering the greatness of the said Abbati, withdrew from Florence with all their households, and went to live in Paris. And there within a short space they gained very great possessions by merchandise. When they saw their wings were grown, having continual note of the affairs of Florence, they wrote letters to the Guelf magnates, who were placed

[1] A striking contrast is furnished by the corresponding passage in the *Ottimo*, which expressly refers to Giotto as still living. Vasari (*op. cit.*) transcribed it.

[2] See note 3 on the *Epist. ad Kanem*, in my *Dant. All. Epistolae*, p. 73.

under bounds or exiled from the city. . . . And having come to an understanding with them, only with intent to return to Florence and work their vengeance, they planned that Charles Lackland should come into Tuscany, promising to bear his expenses and give him the lordship of Florence. . . . When the said Messer Charles had come to Florence the *popolo minuto* cried out *Viva*, and those of the Guelf party cried *Viva, Viva!* The exiles and those placed under bounds on the Guelf side immediately came to the city and broke open the prisons in a popular tumult, and rushed upon the house of the Cerchi (a very rich house, that loved the honour of the city), and plundered them. These Francesi went to the house of the Abbati and slew one of them and set fire to their houses. And the city being in such a tumult, all the greater part of them who had the government of the city withdrew from Florence in divers directions, amongst whom was the author, who was often of the council and of the college of the priors.'

This contortion of the history of Charles of Valois by della Lana leads up to a comparison of the historical knowledge of the two Commentators. The *Ottimo* is in general correct, and the account of the *Frati godenti* given in the notes to Canto xxiii. is almost the only narrative that strikes me as distinctly incorrect.[1] Dionisi has devoted a whole chapter (*Anedd.*, v. 15, p. 90) to the credulity of the *Anonimo Comentatore*, but this must be taken to mean not really ignorance, but the readiness to accept unhistorical and legendary matter, which characterised the whole period.[2] Dante himself gives the legendary versions, not

[1] 'The one had the name of Frate Loderigo de' Carbonesi; he was of the Ghibelline faction: the other Frate Catalano de' Catalani, of the Guelf faction. . . . Frate Loderigo strove to make the Ghibellines the more powerful, whereat Frate Catalano, by his scheming, and the measures he took, expelled him from the city with the Ghibelline party, of which the Uberti were the chief: whence the houses of the Uberti, more than of any other, were hurled to the ground. . . . This is what the text means: And it says "a solitary man," that is solitary and contemplative, such as these men were held to be; but they were in truth such as the effect shows them.' Cf. Villani, vii. 13.

[2] A delicious example is furnished by the note on *Inf.* v. 65: 'Thetis, to save Achilles from joining the expedition to Troy, shut him up in a convent of women. There he seduced the nun Deidamia, daughter of

merely of the lives of Attila, Charlemagne, and Hugh Capet, but of the pilgrim Romeo who lived only half a century before his own day.[1] Moreover, the majority of these tales are found, sometimes in other connections,[2] in Jacopo also, and very nearly in the same words. For the rest, the stories from classical antiquity are mostly taken direct from the ancients, and we frequently find pages of literal translation from classical authors.

With Jacopo della Lana, history and myth, old and new, all drop their characteristic costumes, and meet on the same plane of legendary or rather story-telling narrative. Even Bible tales are told with an easy-going elaboration, and are not seldom given incorrectly. Thus, for instance (*Inf.* xxx.), Potiphara is called Pharaoh's wife, and the only motive given for Joseph's chastity is his unwillingness to have anything to do with a woman of a different religion. In the note to *Inf.* xviii. it is recorded that Thais was Samson's mistress and shore his locks.[3] This treatment of the stories of antiquity gives them a comic charm of their own. For instance we are told (on *Inf.* xxvi. 94) that when Ulysses delayed so long on Circe's island, Telemachus 'wrote letters to him every day. But neither the filial duty of succouring the old age of his father, who in like manner begged him *in scriptis* to return to him, nor the true love which he ought to have had for the wife joined to him in wedlock, namely his Penelope, who wrote to him,' etc. In the eighteenth Canto we have the whole story of Jason with

Licomedes' (compare the note on *Inf.* xxvi. 61). And accordingly in the note on *Purg.* xxii. 109, we read, 'Virgil says to Statius: In that circle may be seen . . . Deidamia with the other nuns of the convent.' —1869.

[1] Consult Raynouard's most instructive essay in the *Journal des Savans*, May 1825, p. 292.

[2] The legend of the discovery of Trajan's head is told by the *Ottimo* in connection with *Par.* xx. 43, by della Lana in connection with *Purg.* x.

[3] The *Ottimo* is guilty of a no less flagrant confusion between Biblical and Pagan antiquity when he calls the wife of Amphiaraus Sapphira, instead of Eriphyle.—1869.

many wondrous additions; and then we hear that Medea, 'like a sage damsel, would have Jason's promise of matrimonial union before she would suffer him to have his whole will of her person. And Jason, good and generous in vows, never lost the game; for he had read Ovid's *Art of Loving*, which says: *Pollicitis dives quilibet esse potest* [Any one may be rich in things to promise].' He frequently quotes the popular books of the Middle Ages, the *Libro Trojano* (on *Par.* xx. 68), the *Vita d'Alessandro* (on *Inf.* xii. and xiv.), the *Contes della tavola ritonda* (on *Inf.* xxxii. 61), the *Storie romane* (*Gesta Romanorum*?) (on *Par.* iv. 84), the *Reali di Francia*, etc. And still oftener he tells tales in the same vein, and not unfrequently outbids them. Alexander had eighty thousand families murdered in Jerusalem at once (*Inf.* xii. 107). Aristotle burnt the works of Plato and Socrates out of envy (*Inf.* iv. 134). Athalam (Atlas), the husband of Electra, founded Fiesole, to which he gave that name to indicate that it should remain unique of its kind (*fie sola*, *Inf.* iv. 121).[1] Constantine can only persuade his people to accompany him to Byzantium by promising to bring them back to Roman soil within the year. He keeps his promise by ordering a quantity of Roman earth to be brought over in ships, whence the land is still called Romania (*Inf.* xix. 115). Attila wishes to take Rimini, and making his way into the city in disguise sits down to play chess in a public hall. One of the other players recognises him, and strikes him dead with the chess-board (*Inf.* xii. 134). Mohammed was a Roman Cardinal and was sent to Africa to convert the land, on the understanding that if the Papal chair became vacant during his absence he was to be elected Pope. But the Cardinals broke faith with him, and in revenge he founded a new religion (*Inf.* xxviii. 31).[2] Saladin learns

[1] Villani says the same, i. 7.

[2] Obviously a dressed-up version of the story of Sergius.

from an astrologer that Godfrey de Bouillon will be his death. He comes disguised to Paris, and is recognised by a priest who had been to the Holy Sepulchre. The king of France learns this, and bids Godfrey ride through Saladin's street with a great show of arms. Saladin recognises that he can do nothing against him, and wishes to return home. But the king detains him, and he dies at the court (*Inf.* iv. 129).[1]

This kind of treatment cannot but entail ludicrous blunders, of which I will only give a few examples. Gerion was a king of Spain who by his cunning conquered Hercules, and Icarus was the son of Daedalus, 'an engineer of Puglia' (both on *Inf.* xvii.). 'Harpies are a kind of worms with big black-and-red wings. They have human faces, but all the rest of their body is hairy like that of rats' (*Inf.* xiii.). To determine whether Alba or Rome should have the supremacy a threefold duel was fought between 'three men of Asia and three of Croatia' (*Par.* vi.).[2] The better to bring the flavour of these stories home to the reader, I will add to the account of Charles of Valois already given two others. One relates to antiquity, and one to a period not remote from that of the Commentator himself. On *Par.* iv. he says:

'Caesar having been expelled from Rome by the Romans, and the Senators and Consuls, such as were Pompey, Cato, etc.,

[1] The legend of Saladin's journey through the Western lands is widespread. Most versions make him return home in safety, as for instance the one followed by Benvenuto da Imola in his Commentary, which I quote here from a MS. which Signor Santi Fabri, Professor of Mathematics in Ravenna, has had the rare generosity to present to me [vol. i. pp. 167 *sq.* of the Vernon edition.—ED.] Consult further *Nov.* 25 of the *Novellino*.

[2] No less delightful is the etymology of the name of Vespasian from the circumstance that some wasps made a nest in his nose. (*Purg.* xxi. 82.); the explanation of the origin of the nickname *Regina* given to Caesar because of his relations with Nikomedes (*Purg.* xxvi. 76); and the elaborate description of the ancient Roman triumphal car, after the model of the mediæval Carroccio ('and there went a priest in full sacerdotal garb, singing mass on the said chariot'), *Purg.* xxix. 115.—1869.

ruling the land, this Caesar made a great war upon Rome, so that the Romans thought to slay Caesar, saying: "Man dead, war done!" They found amongst other Romans one of the name of Mucius, who offered to go and slay Caesar for the peace of his city. And he (not to make a long tale) went under disguise, and when before the face of Caesar laid his hand upon his dagger and framed to thrust it into his breast, but he was in such haste that he missed his stroke and did not hit him. The folk that were on guard around their lord seized him and were for slaying him forthwith. But Caesar commanded that he should not be touched. He questioned him as to what it was that he would do, and who had set him on. Who said to him; "I will tell if thou wilt do me a grace." Caesar promised it him. He said: "It was my will to slay thee, and the Romans set me on, and therefore did I come. The grace that I desire is this: that thou wilt do for me, or let me do, vengeance upon my right hand which missed the stroke, so that I did not smite thee with my dagger." Caesar said: "Do what thou wilt." He ordered them to bring him fire, and held his hand in it till he had burned it off, and the arm up to the elbow.'

[*Purg.* xx. 69:[1] 'The council was ordained by Messer the Pope at Lyons, on the Rhone, in Provence; and thither were summoned and called all the worthy clerks, and amongst others was summoned St. Thomas. When it came to the day of the departure of St. Thomas from Naples, and he had come to the said Charles to take his leave, and ask him whether he had ought to intrust to him, the king said to him: "Fra Tommaso, if the Pope should ask concerning me, what answer will you make?" And Fra Tommaso said: "I will tell him nought save the truth."—Then Fra Tommaso set out to go to Lyons. The king, pondering on the word of Fra Tommaso, was afraid, inasmuch as he knew that if the truth were known about his deeds, he would be displeasing to all. Thereat his thoughts became right dismal. The physicians who had charge of his person, perceiving this, asked him the reason. He told it to one of them. The said physician answered: "Messere, if you will, the remedy is at hand." The king answered, "I will."

[1] When this essay appeared in the Vienna *Jahrbücher* the account of the origin of the enmity of the Colonna to Boniface VIII. (*Inf.* xxvii. 106) appeared in this place as the second example. But since the same narrative appears almost word for word in the *Ottimo* also, I have substituted for it another equally unhistorical story which is peculiar to Jacopo della Lana.—1869.

The said physician mounted horse with such company as he chose, and day and night dismounted not[1] till he had caught up Fra Tommaso. Then he said: "Messer the king has grieved much that he suffered you to depart without a physician to be in charge of your person on this journey; and therefore he has sent me to come to watch over you." The Frate thanked him as was meet, and said: "Let the will of my Liege Lord be accomplished." . . . Two days afterwards the said Frate passed to the other life.']

Elsewhere we cannot even attribute what we find to a romantic perversion of history, but must admit that it is a case of pure ignorance. Dionisi (*Anedd.*, v. p. 103) has already remarked that in the Commentary to *Inf.* vi. Ciacco and the *parte selvaggia* [savage party] are erroneously called Guelfs; and Rezzi (*lettera sopra i comenti*, p. 9) has pointed out how erroneous della Lana's notes on Penestrino (*Inf.* xxvii. 102) and Taddeo (*Par.* xii. 83) are; and the list of these blunders might be indefinitely extended. Thus he calls Cornelia, not Julia, 'Pompey's second wife' (*Inf.* iv. 128), Geri del Bello becomes a false coiner (*Inf.* xxix. 27), King John (*Giovanni*) or the young King (*giovane*) is made a son (not brother) of Richard Cœur de Lion (*Inf.* xxviii. 135); and in explanation of the *Caorsini* and *Guaschi* in *Par.* xxvii. 58 we read: 'They of Cahors and they of Gascony held between them the greater part of the college of Cardinals, so that no other family could succeed to the office of the Papacy.'

Geographical blunders are nearly allied to historical. We learn that Lydia is in Greece (*Inf.* xvii. 18 and *Purg.* xii. 43), that the sea on the coast of Holland is called 'the Lion's sea, or, literally speaking, the Mediterranean' (*Inf.* xv. 4). Charybdis is called a 'northern sea' (*Inf.* vii. 22; cf. Dionisi, *Anedd.*, v. p. 103). And even localities quite

[1] *Non calò* = 'he did not leave the saddle.' Scarabelli has *cavalcò* instead of this far more expressive *non calò* of Vendelino's edition.—1869.

near at hand are confused in the most extraordinary fashion. The Maremma passes for an island (*Inf.* xxv. 19); we are told (*Inf.* xxix. 48) that the Chiana valley is a 'place in Alto Pascio, which lies between Florence, Lucca, and Pistoja; and the name of that district is Val di Chiana.' And in the note to *Inf.* xvi. 97 it is stated that the Acquacheta (*i.e.* the Montone) is called Livia below Forlì.[1] Only what lies immediately in or around Bologna, as the towers Asinella and Carisenda (*Inf.* xxxi. 136) and the streamlets Savena and Reno (*Inf.* xviii. 61), is described precisely and correctly.

Even the poet's language often seems to be pretty far out of della Lana's reach, to judge by his frequent mistakes in the simple explanation of words. In *Inf.* xv. 63, *macigno* is explained as follows:

'In lingua Fiorentina è a dire stancaruolo, cioè inganno, e sottilitade di cautele in danno d'altrui.' *Inf.* vi. 31: '*Agugnare*, cioè trangugare.' *Inf.* ix. chiosa gen.: '*Heresiarche*, cioè quelli ch'enno arche d'eresia.' *Inf.* xvii. 85: '*Riprezo* (ribrezzo), cioè cominciamento. *Rezzo* è l'ora del dì.' *Inf.* xxvi. 14: '*Iborni*, cioè freddi, e stanchi.'[2] *Inf.* xxix. 41: '*Conversi*, cioè termini.' (See, however, Salv. Betti in his *Prose* (Milan, 1827), p. 259.) *Purg.* xx. 67: '*Ammenda* nasce da questo verbo *amendo, as, at*, ch'è verbo che significa agere in altri ira, turbazione, e furiositade; onde *amens* ch'è suo participio significa l'animo turbato, o irato, o furioso, onde si segue *amendus, da, dum*, aggettivo dell' animo.'

[1] Since Professor Scarabelli has taken these indications of historical and geographical errors in his beloved della Lana so ill, and has tried to explain them away in detail, I add a few supplementary instances here. *Purg.* xii. 34: while Nimrod was building the tower of Babel, the flood came and drowned all the workers.—*Purg.* xviii. 101: 'Ilerda is in England.'—*Purg.* xxxiii. 62: Lübeck, to which a passage quoted from Albertus Magnus refers, is said to be a 'city of Poland.'—*Par.* i. 19: Apollo helped Phoebus in his contest with Marsyas: 'Phoebus had the pipe at his lips, and Apollo blew, so that every one thought Phoebus was playing when really it was Apollo.'—*Par.* i. 31: '*Parnasso* or *Mount Delfos*, which are all one.'—1869.

[2] The *Ottimo's* explanation, 'cioè li ladri,' is however really no better.—1869.

This many-sided ignorance easily explains his frequent failure to understand the poet's meaning. Under this head we must place the exaggerated allegorising not only of the *Comedy*, but of all the tales and poems of antiquity, although this tendency is deeply rooted in the time, and not peculiar to our author. See, for example, the beginning of *Inf.* xxx. But the mistakes of this kind are doubly to be condemned when they not only stray beyond the limits intended by the poet, but actually contradict him, as in *Inf.* ii., where della Lana tells us that the punishments of Dante's Hell form a *contrast* to the sins.[1] Amongst other mistakes we may note the explanation of Francesca's, 'that day we read no further,' by 'and there she put a stop to her reading. And afterwards, both there and elsewhere, they conversed in other fashion,' and the statement so much discussed last year, that Ugolino (*Inf.* xxxiii. 75) consumed the bodies of his children, if indeed the note is really due to Jacopo himself.[2]

And finally I must add a word on the diction of the two Commentators. That of the *Ottimo* is throughout pure and good. Jacopo's, on the other hand, is very uneven. His speech is as naïve, unembarrassed, and pure as that of any other of the *trecentisti*, whenever he lets himself go in telling a story, but, as Salviati rightly remarked, it becomes clumsy and semi-latinised when he is explaining the meaning of a word or attempting to deal with a scholastic problem.

I have been compelled to set forth at all this length the agreement and the difference between the two Commentaries, and to make it perfectly clear that we have two entirely separate works before us, in order to be able to propound the question—Which is to be regarded as the

[1] Hermes, *loc. cit.*, pp. 165, 166.

[2] Scarabelli himself urges arguments well worthy of consideration against its authenticity.—1869.

original, and which as a partial imitation?—for that the one has frequently drawn upon the other, and is in a sense based upon it, is perfectly obvious.

I opine that scarcely a single reader will hesitate to answer this question in favour of the *Ottimo*. And indeed not only does the unwavering opinion of many centuries assert it to be early, and indeed the earliest of the great Commentaries, but we have the most convincing proof of its having been written little less that a decade after the death of the poet. Della Lana can appeal to no such witnesses. Writers on these subjects assign him to about 1400, or at any rate to the second half of the fourteenth century,[1] and their conclusions seem to be warranted by the work itself. We have noted already how remote Dante's time appears to be as seen by the Commentator, and how erroneously he often records its events; but we seem also to have positive proof in the note to *Inf.* xviii. 28, where it is said that the Jubilee is celebrated every fifty years. Now the Jubilee of the Church was originally ordained by Boniface VIII. to be celebrated every hundred years only, and it was not till 1349 that Clement VI. ordered it to be celebrated every fifty years.

Nevertheless we have to admit that there are insuperable difficulties in the way of accepting the apparent inference that Jacopo wrote after the year 1349. We have a Latin translation of his Commentary, to be described more fully later on, made by the jurist Alberico da Rosate. Now Alberico died in the year 1354,[2] and it is scarcely likely

[1] *Risposta del prof. Rosini alla lettera del prof. Carmignani sul verso, Inf.* xxxiii. 72; 2nd edition (Pisa, 1826), p. 64.

[2] When this essay appeared in the Vienna *Jahrbücher* I gave the date of his death wrongly as 1345. This is confuted by the inscription on his tomb, which still exists in the former church of the Celestines, now a cadet school; and also by his own assertion in his *Vocabularius juris* that he attended the Jubilee at Rome as a pilgrim, with his wife and child, in 1350. Agost. Salviani, *Int. ad Alberico da Rosciate*; Bergamo, 1842.—1869.

that a man honoured with such weighty missions and offices by his native city should have been able to spare time in his last years, when laden with honours and business[1] for what would doubtless be regarded as so extraneous an occupation as the translation of a Commentary which was scarcely completed, and had as yet received no general recognition. This conclusion seems to be confirmed by the fact that (at any rate according to the two MSS. at present known) Alberigo signs himself at the end of the work, not *Doctor*, but only *juris peritus*. Moreover Dionisi (*Anedd.*, v. pp. 95, 96) tells us of yet another Latin translation by a certain Guillielmino Bernardi, which is dated 1349, and I myself found among the Strozzi MSS. in Florence one (No. 166) which contains fragments of della Lana, and in which the scribe writes at the beginning of a new sheet (Quaternio) *Col nome di Dio, anno* 1349, apparently on occasion of resuming his work in the new year.

So the argument drawn from the reckoning of the Jubilee is certainly fallacious, and the Commentary is in point of fact earlier than 1349. And indeed we may readily understand how a later copyist, having regard to the customs of his own time, might look upon the C simply as a clerical error for L, and proceed to correct it. And this must be the origin of the reading we now find in the MSS. Still less can we draw any inference from the way in which Dante's times are spoken of as long passed; for this is thoroughly characteristic of Jacopo's story-telling treatment of his matter, which brings the remote nearer and puts the near further away. He speaks for instance of the Vatican, which must have been known to every Italian, in terms which could not be more remote if he were telling of the palace of Prester John. *Par.* xxvii. 25, he says, 'There was a place in Rome called the Vatican, wherein the Popes used to be buried in the olden time.' And

[1] Tiraboschi, *Storia*, etc. (Milan, 1822), v. 468.

although one of the passages, selected above as an instance of the remoteness of Dante's times, refers to Henry VII., another passage (*Par.* vi.) shows that the Commentator was really perfectly at home in the history of this Emperor.

It is time then to determine on independent grounds what the true date of Jacopo's Commentary is; for we have disposed of the reasons urged in favour of the generally accepted later date. The researches concerning the person of the Commentator, which Rezzi[1] undertook, have led to no results. Strange to say, the evidence as to the Commentator's very name is scarce. In most MSS. the Commentary is anonymous; in some later copies it is attributed to Boccaccio, Petrarch, Ser Cambi, or Benvenuto da Imola, which last name it bears in Vendelino's edition. But the Riccardian Library in Florence contains a fine ancient manuscript of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* (No. 1005), which the character of the handwriting appears to indicate as produced in Bologna. By one of those chances which often befall MSS. the *Paradiso* has strayed into the Brera Library at Milan. In external form this MS. exactly resembles the ordinary copies of Justinian's *Corpus Juris* with the gloss by Accursius; and just as we frequently see at the end of the several notes to the latter *Dominus Doctor Accursius*, so in the former we repeatedly find '*Jacomo de Cione* (this, or more exactly *çone*, and not *Zane*, is what I read in the MS.) *del fra Phylippo dalla Lana.*'[2] Further, at the end of Alberico's translation we find written in Latin: 'This Commentary was composed by a certain Dominus Jacobus de la lana, a Bolognese, a licentiate in Arts and in Theology, who was the son of brother Philip

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 15.

[2] The notes to *Par.* xii., and xv. have '*Jacomo de çone del fra filipo dalla lana, bononiensis*,' to *Par.* xvi. '*Jacomo de çone del fra filippo dalla lana bolognese*,' to *Par.* xxiv. '*Jacomo de çone del fra phylippo lanarolo*,' and to *Parad.* xxi. '*Jacomo glosò e Dante testò*' [Jacomo's Commentary and Dante's text].—1869.

de la lana, of the Order of the Jovials, and he wrote it in the Tuscan vernacular.' Finally, Nidobeato says in his preface: 'Jacobus Laneus appears to have surpassed them in this his maternal, to wit the Bolognese, speech,' etc. Scanty as these testimonies are, they strike me as clear and decided enough to refute both Rezzi's doubts as to whether Jacopo is really to be regarded as the writer of the Commentary, and Foscolo's rash hypothesis that this Jacopo is to be identified with the poet's son of the same name.[1]

Since we have no adequate information concerning the person of the Commentator,[2] we are compelled to turn, for an answer to the question we have propounded, to the contents of the Commentary. But this writer's peculiar style is totally devoid of individual touches, and makes it far more difficult in his case than in most others to fix any definite date with certainty. In going through the numerous authors to whom he refers, or from whom he makes quotations, I have met with none of a later date than Maestro Buono (on *Inf.* xxiv.), whom Tiraboschi (v. 332) gives as flourishing between 1320 and 1330.

The two following passages, however, are more significant. In the note to *Inf.* xx. 96, Jacopo tells how Pinamonte Buonaccorsi seized the lordship of Mantua, and conferred it on his family. He then adds: 'From that time forth there have been many wiles, whereby one of them has sought to decoy it from another. And the aforesaid Messer Pinamonte came to such a pass that his sons and grandsons held him under courteous restraint; and in such state he died. And one expelled another in such fashion that at this present there is not in Mantua save only Messer Passarino.' Here the writer is obviously

[1] *Discorso sul testo della Div. Com.* (Londra, 1825), p. 390. See also my note 35 to the *Epistola ad Kanem* in *Dant. All. Epistolae.*

[2] Ang. Gualandi has now collected a great deal of instructive matter concerning Jacopo, from documents, in his *Giacomo della Lana, primo commentatore della Div. Comm.*; Bologna, 1865.—1869.

speaking of his own time and from his own personal knowledge. Now Passarino's rule (according to Aliprandus Mantuanus, and according to Villani, x. 97) lasted from 1308 to July 15th (Aug. 14), 1328, so that Jacopo must have written before the latter date, for we may assume that a Bolognese would be well posted in the events occurring in Mantua, hardly a day's journey distant.

Further, the passage quoted above in full on the most recent Florentine history is followed by these words: 'And when they had returned they straightway made a new election of Priors, and laid[1] hands on all the offices of the city, placing under bounds,[2] banishing, plundering, casting down,[3] and wasting, by all means that they might compass, those who before held power; and in such manner have they held the city even till this day.' Now this description of the state of Florence which the Commentator describes as still continuing is perfectly true of the whole period between the entry of Charles of Valois and the death of Castruccio Castracane (3rd Sept. 1328, Villani, x. 86). But from that time on till the year 1340 all was quiet in Florence, and the arts of peace flourished (Macchiavelli, *Storie*, Bk. i. p. 110 of the Piatti edition). So by this path too we are led to the same conclusion, that Jacopo wrote before 1328, that is to say at least six years before the *Ottimo*.

I will not pretend to deny that this conclusion, which I reached more than four years ago, was so unexpected that I long doubted its correctness, and was not fully convinced of its truth till it was decisively confirmed by evidence from other directions. But when we come to compare

1 '*Recaronsi*.' Scarabelli has '*reccattonsi*' [Vendelino *recattonsi*.—ED.], a word unknown both to myself and the lexicographers.—1869.

2 '*Confinando*.' Scarabelli here and elsewhere has '*confidando*' [1866. Correctly given in the 1865 ed.—ED.], which gives no sense.—1869.

3 '*Predando o cadendo* (? = *facendo cadere*).' Scarabelli has '*prendendo e ancidendo*,' which last word, at any rate, may be right.—1869.

the two with a view to ascertaining their relative antiquity, and ask ourselves in general terms by what marks we are to distinguish between the earlier and the later of two Commentators, must we not admit that frequent references to other works of a like nature, especially on subjects relating to the period near about the date of the writer himself, are a note of relatively late origin? Well now, in della Lana's work the references to different interpretations of a passage given by other authors are so rare that I have, so far, only noted two (*Par.* xvii. 80[1] and xviii. 134). And in both instances the notes that contain alternative views of other Commentators have so little connection with the rest of the work that it would be easy to suppose they were added by a later hand.

In the *Ottimo*, on the other hand, references to other interpretations occur on almost every page. Ser Graziolo de' Bambagioli, Chancellor of Bologna, is quoted as an earlier Commentator, *Inf.* vii. 89 and xiii. 91 (I have not found any other instances in the portion of the work in my hands, but Bandini says that Ser Graziolo is quoted *saepissime*), and the views of 'others' (*alcuni* or *alcuno*) are brought forward again and again, as the following hasty list will show: *Inf.* ii. 94, iv. 121, v. 103, viii. 19, 28, ix. 7, 52 (twice), 54, 113, x. 118, xii. 111, 135, xiv. 94 (twice), xvi. 19, xvii. 58, xxii. 111, etc. The most important fact, however, is that the *Ottimo* actually quotes and copies Jacopo della Lana (though he never names him), and that not once or twice (so as to leave room to suspect mere later interpolations), but with quite remarkable frequency. I subjoin a few of the most striking passages:

[1] The note runs, in Vendelino's edition: '*Because of his small age.* And note that, according to another interpretation, Messere Cane was but nine years old in 1300, and this they believe to be the truer explanation.' Scarabelli simply omits this reference to a second interpretation, without so much as mentioning it.—1869.

Ottimo.

Inf. xii. 4. Another says [*altri dice*] that the Adige is a river which, by its continual course, has gnawed the mountain of Trento at the foot, so that in process of time all that part of the mountain which should have been sustained by its basis, which has been gnawed away, has rushed and tumbled down.

xii. 134. One says [*alcuno dice*] that when he [Attila] was at the siege of Rimino in Romagna, he entered unbeknown into the city to hear what they were saying of him; and, being recognised by some one who was playing at chess, he was struck on the head with the chess-board and slain.

xxv. 25. Another says [*altri dice*] that Hercules, grieving for this his herd, which had been stolen from him, and he knew not by whom, received the advice to take of the kine that were left and drive them up and down the country and make them low, and that if in any place his beasts which had been taken from him were hidden, he would then learn

Jac. della Lana.

He brings for an example the case of Trento[1] in the mountains; and in its valley is the Adice, which is a river which, by the continuing of its course, has gnawed the mountain at the foot; and then in process of time all that part of the mountain which should have been sustained by that basis has rushed and tumbled down.

When he came to Arimino secretly and in disguise, he entered into the city and he went to the portico where they were playing at chess; one of those playing perceived him and struck him on the head with a board and slew him.

Hercules, seeing that his herd kept diminishing, and that subtractions were made from it, asked counsel as to what he might do, and was thus advised: Take of these thy kine and drive them up and down the country, and make them low. If in any place those beasts who have been taken from thee are hidden thou shalt know it, because cattle have[2] such a

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1 Vendelino has '*sicome intrento nelle montagne che nella sua valle e la dise che un fiume.*' Out of which Scarabelli makes the completely erroneous '*sicome entrando nelle montagne, nella sua valle discende un fiume, lo quale.*'—1869.

2 Scarabelli wrongly alters '*bovina ha*' into '*i bovi han.*' A bull does not answer a bull, but a cow.—1869.

it; because the nature of cattle is of such condition that one answers to another. He followed the advice, and found near about the Aventine mountain that there came an answer to the lowing of his kine, so that at last he discovered the theft and the robber, and with his mace smote Caco; and he was not content to give him so many blows as to kill him, but eased his mind with respect to him by giving him many more after he was dead.

nature that the one answers to the other. When he had taken this advice, he found near about the Aventine mountain, that there came an answer to the lowing of his kine; so that, in the end, he discovered the theft and the robber. Having found him out by cunning, Hercules fell upon him and smote him on the head with his iron mace; and was not content to give him so many blows as to kill him, but eased his mind by giving him many more after he was dead.

No less striking than these three passages are the following, some of which are of greater length: *Inf.* viii. 1, ix. 112 (towards the end of the note), xii. 107, xiii. 151, xiv. 94 (p. 275 in the Pisa edition), and xx. 40.[1] [*Ott.* ad. loc. Jac. at end of canto.] It is such passages as these which make Dionisi's idea (*Anedd.*, v. 107) that later copyists have here and there introduced passages from the *Ottimo* into Jacopo della Lana, and that this is the only reason for their apparent agreement, absolutely untenable.

And now that della Lana's priority has been clearly established, we can at last proceed to the closer examination of the mutual relations of the two. The common basis of the erudition scattered through both is due exclusively to Jacopo. He made scanty use of the classical authors, with the exception of the very best known, and with these he appears

[1] The *Ottimo's* note on *Inf.* ii. 55 is particularly worthy of attention. It first gives Jacopo's note complete, almost as it stands in Scarabelli's edition (*Inf.* ii. 53), and then adds: 'I have given this note, but I am not satisfied with it; for the writer of this note only has two ladies, namely, Lucia and Beatrice, whereas the text has three of them,' etc. Torri, who did not recognise the connection between the two Commentators, has quite unwarrantably thrown this addition below the text, as a gloss, whereas it is unquestionably genuine. It is quoted by the *Crusca* (under '*cooperante*').—1869.

only to be acquainted at second hand; and in this direction the later *Ottimo* supplies numerous and valuable additions to the store. With Orosius, Isidore, the Christian Fathers, and the whole scholastic literature of the Middle Ages, Jacopo is far more familiar. I subjoin a list of authors, some of whom struck me as rare, while others are entirely unknown to me: Ptolemy's *Centiloquium* and *Almagestum* (which I take to be what '*Giebersi*' in the text stands for), Damasenus, Simonides, Albumassar, Alcalizius, Papias and Huguccio, Britone's *Composizione delle voci*, Frater Aegidius *de regimine principum* and *della formazione del corpo umano*, Albertus Magnus's *Fra Moneta de' frati predicatori*, Elgiebers *de Alchimia*, Arrighetto, Campanus, etc. etc.

The *Ottimo* then[1] makes use of this store of erudition, sometimes adopting his predecessor's quotations word for word, only stripping them of their barbarous semi-Latin form, but often shortening them, or entirely omitting what he thinks unessential. It is almost comic sometimes to see how the unfortunate *Ottimo* suddenly loses patience in copying these long discussions, and leaves out a few necessary links of the long chain of which della Lana's demonstrations are generally composed. The passage already given from the introduction to *Inf.* xiv. may serve as an example of this, though it would be easy to find far more striking ones. The careful examination of a single one of these passages will suffice to make it obvious that Jacopo is the *Ottimo's* source.

In matters of history, on the other hand, the *Ottimo* only occasionally follows Jacopo; he usually takes his material from other more trustworthy sources. If we were to regard the *Ottimo* as the earlier of the two, it would be inconceiv-

[1] The *Ottimo's* additions are generally drawn from earlier writers whom Jacopo della Lana has not consulted. I may mention as examples: Palladius *de re rustica*, on *Purg.* xxviii. 6.—Augustinus *de spiritu et anima*—Cassiodorus *de anima*—Martianus Capella, on *Purg.* xxii. 10.—Ausonius [?] *Cento*, on *Purg.* xxii. 64.—Paulus Diaconus—Alanus de insulis *Planctus naturae*, on *Purg.* xx. 10, 82.—1869.

able how Jacopo della Lana, instead of adopting the true accounts contained in the *Ottimo*, should have succeeded in getting hold of so many false ones; for after the passages given above it would be idle to deny that the later writer was acquainted with the work of his predecessor. On the other hand, it is easy to see how Jacopo, thrown on his own resources, only had very imperfect information to give on many points, while the *Ottimo*, in addition to these accounts, had the command of his own stores of knowledge and the remarks of other writers, and was therefore often able to hit upon the truth.

Had not Jacopo della Lana had the advantage of priority (which may have given his Commentary currency before ever the *Ottimo* was composed), it would really be impossible to understand how its fame could have transcended that of all other Commentaries during the next century and a half, in spite of all its blunders, its often clumsy style, and its great bulk. I shall presently give some details as to a great number of MSS. with which I alone am acquainted; but even amongst subsequent Commentators there is hardly one who has not borrowed from Jacopo, or made frequent references to him. Even Benvenuto da Imola makes excerpts from him in his historical notes more than once.[1] The account of Vanni Fucci as there given (*Inf.* xxiv. 128, col. 1095, of Muratori's edition of 1783) is a particularly noteworthy instance.

I suppose I may now assume that these arguments, severally and collectively, have convinced my readers of the high antiquity of Jacopo's work; but I must not fail to rehearse one more argument already urged by my honoured friend, Professor Viviani of Udine (*Dante Bartolin.*, vol. i. p. xlv), to prove that della Lana wrote before 1337.

[1] I refer in the first instance to Muratori's excerpts, but the 265 columns of large folio printed by him only embrace between a sixth and a seventh of the whole Commentary as it stands in the MSS.

It is as follows: In a MS. dating from this year (1337), belonging to the Marquis Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, the summary of contents of the several cantos is given in the same wording as in the 1477 edition of Jacopo. Now if the writer of the Trivulzian MS. could extract his headings from della Lana, it proves that the Commentary was written before 1337.—We cannot, however, assert that the originality of the connection between the Commentary and these headings, on which the proof rests, has been strictly proved.

Before passing to what I have to say on the MSS., however, I must note one remarkable phenomenon which appears again and again in both Commentaries. It has indeed little to do with our present task of distinguishing between the two, but is of such great interest on other grounds that I cannot pass it by in silence. Our critics are prone to suppose that they have got a peculiarly trustworthy guide to the correction of the text of the *Divine Comedy*, when they become possessed of a MS. dating from somewhere near the poet's own time. Some content themselves with fifteenth-century MSS., others feel that at any rate they may assign the highest authority to a fourteenth-century MS.; and if a MS. here and there is dated within the first half of that century (and we have dated MSS. of 1336, 1337, and 1343) it can hardly escape the reputation of something like infallibility. But if we take counsel with the Commentators of the declining fourteenth century (Boccaccio, Benvenuto da Imola, and Francesco Buti) we shall soon realise how much the MSS. of the time varied, and how incorrect they were. Every one of these Commentators cites an extraordinary number of alternative readings, and we often find that the true one has already been lost.[1] As a matter of fact, before the earliest dated MS. in 1334, and even before 1328, the copies of the *Divine Comedy* were

[1] See the *Prolegomeni Critici* to my Berlin edition, pp. lxv *sq.*—1869.

already marred in many places, and offered very various readings. We can only partially discover their condition from our old Commentators, it is true. For one thing, only a small portion of the text is given with the Commentary, and even when passages are copied straight into the notes as they stand, there is always the possibility that the writer of the Commentary may have had a sound text before him, and that the transcriber is responsible for its corruption. So we can only identify with certainty those readings which form the basis of a special exposition.—Amongst these we may instance the false reading *l'arme* instead of *l'arnie* explained in the *Ottimo* in *Inf.* xvi. 3. And we can see that the *Ottimo* not only had a bad text sometimes, but was also aware of the existence of variants; for he remarks on *Inf.* xiii. 73, that some read *nove* instead of *nuove radici*. [Cf. also *Inf.* xvi. 19, where he contrasts the readings *ei* and *ehi*.][1] It is the same with della Lana. We find *li urli* instead of *burli* in *Inf.* vii. 30; in *Inf.* viii. 78 he seems to have read *fusser fosse* instead of *ferro fosse*, for he explains *fosse* as graves. Dionisi (*Anedd.*, v. 106, *Prep.* i. 82) has already pointed out his false reading, *nuovo Jason si radi*,[2] instead of *sarà di* (*Inf.* xix. 85). Nor are instances wanting of the citation of variants. See for instance *Purg.* vii. 15 (*ove 'l minor s' appiglia*), where Jacopo says: 'Another text says "*dove 'l notrir s' appiglia*," that is the navel, by which children are nurtured in the mother's womb. But whichever of these two we take the author means to show that Sordello embraced him reverently.' The same variant is noted by Caetani's Postillator, and stands in the text of the MS. claimed as a copy by Boccaccio's own hand. It

[1] In Torri, however, the note on the passage is so corrupt that it is hard to recognise the sense given above.—1869.

[2] '*Si radi*' was a not unusual expression in the Middle Ages. Thus Odofredus in the *Digestum vetus* (Lib. ii. *De Edendo*, end of first § of *Qua quisque*) says, '*Taceat Placentinus et abradat de Summa sua, causam esse actionem.*'

is also given on the margin of Dolce's edition. All this goes to show that however valuable MSS. supposed to be of great antiquity may be, we could not repose unquestioning confidence in them, even if they dated from before the poet's death.

[In the Vienna *Jahrbücher* an enumeration of the MSS. of the *Ottimo* and of Jacopo della Lana which were then known to me was here appended. At that time, when the first sheets of the *Ottimo* were already in print (1826), the editors, Torri and Rosini of Pisa, were convinced that only one MS. of the *Ottimo* existed, and at first they ridiculed my assurances to the contrary. But I was able in this catalogue to point with certainty to about a dozen Codices of this valued Commentary. I also enumerated thirty-four Codices of the Italian text of Jacopo and eight of the Latin translation, the former containing not only a number which were previously unassigned, but also not a few which till then had been erroneously given under the names of Petrarch, Boccaccio, Giovanni Ser Cambi, and the Milanese Sexvirs. Vicomte Colomb de Batines, who has lived in Florence for years, and devoted himself with unwearying industry to Dante Bibliography, took up and carried forward these studies again in the year 1843 in a letter to Seymour Kirkup.[1] Three years later he treated the same points still more elaborately in his *Bibliographia Dantesca*.[2] Being unacquainted with German, he had a translation of my article in the Vienna *Jahrbücher* made for him, and to judge by the numerous quotations, it must have given the sense of the original very accurately. His bibliographic indications are naturally more complete

[1] *Del Comento su la Div. Comm., appellato l'Ottimo, e di quello attribuito a Jacopo della Lana, fatti e congetture*, in his *Studi inediti su Dante Al.* (Firenze, 1846), pp. 131-158.

[2] Vol. i. pp. 582-633.

than mine, and they correct them in several details, generally on adequate grounds. This would seem to render a reprint of my catalogue superfluous; but for those who may still wish to make use of my work on account of one or two special points not included by de Batines, I will append a key for the comparison of the two lists. As concerns the *Ottimo* my numbers 1 and 2 simply refer to MSS. used by Vasari, the Deputati, and Bastiano de' Rossi. I give the rest of my numbers in Arabic character, with the corresponding numbers by which de Batines indicates the same MSS. in Roman: 3 = I.—4 = XVII.—5 = XIX.—6 = XX.—7 = II.—8 = VII.—9 = III.—10 = VI.—13 = XXII.—15, 16 = XVIII. It must be noted further that my Nos. 11 and 12, which I believed to be MSS. of the *Ottimo*, are given by de Batines to Jacopo as Nos. VIII. and XXI., while I had myself remarked of No. 14 that the MS. (Laur. XC. inf. 42) did not contain the pure *Ottimo*.[1] The French bibliographer has added no less than thirteen codices, his Nos. IV.–VI., VIII.–XVI., and XXI., one of which, however (formerly belonging to the Marquis Pucci), had already been indicated by me,[2] and six others (XI.–XVI.) only contain the pure *Ottimo* on about the first twenty-two cantos of the *Purgatorio*, together with a Commentary on the *Paradiso* based on the *Ottimo*, but amplified and otherwise manipulated.

The correspondence between my numbers and those of de Batines in designating the MSS. of Jacopo della Lana is as follows: 1 = I.—2 = XI.—3 = XII.—4 = XIII.—5 = XXVIII.—6 = XXVII.—7 = XIV.—8 = XXXV.—9 = II.—10 = XV.—11 = XXIV.—12 = XXXIII.—13 = XXXVII.—14 = XVI.—15 = VI.—16 = VII.—17 = XXV.—19 = XXIII.—20 = IV.—21 = XL.—22 = XXVI.—23 = IX.—24 = XXXIV^{b}.—25 = XXXIV^{a}.—26 = X.—27 = XXXVI.—28 = LI.—29 = LII.—30 = LIII.—31 = XXII.—32 = III.—33 = XX.—34 = V. My

[1] De Batines, i. 633; ii. 31, no. 46; 286, VII. [cf. i. 600, 604].
[2] *Antologia*, CXXVIII. 151, 152.

No. 18 merely indicates two MSS. of della Lana referred to by Salviati, as to which it was impossible to say whether they were identical with any, and if so which, of those known to us. De Batines' Nos. VIII. and XXI. I have already mentioned as formerly assigned by me to the *Ottimo* under Nos. 11 and 12. De Batines' Jacopo Nos. XXVIII.–XXXII. are identical with his *Ottimo* Nos. XI.–XV., since the MSS. in question consist of fragments of the two works combined. The Frenchman's No. XLI. (as he does not fail to state) was indicated by myself. He has however added five new MSS., his Nos. XVII., XVIII., XIX., XXXIX., and XLII. Since then I have become acquainted with the following additional MSS.: (1) In the Royal Library of Copenhagen; (2) Bodleian No. 116 (Barlow, *Contributions*, p. 60, gives it as No. 115); (3) Paris Bibl. Nat., No. 7259; and (4) *ibidem*, No. 7766; (5) *Vaticana-Urbinas*, No. 374; (6) *Vatic. Reg. Christinae*, 1485; (7) *Vatic. Ottobon.* 2358. This last MS. de Batines describes in his second volume, pp. 172, 173 (No. 328), but mentions that he has neglected to include it among della Lana's codices.—Whether Scarabelli had seen any other MSS. remains uncertain. According to p. 18 of his preface, he made use of a Sienese MS., H. VIII. 18, but he is so careless that we may probably take him to mean H. VII. 18 (de Batines' No. XIX.). In the same place he gives the correct reference to the Laurentian MS., XL. 36 (de Batines' XI.), but on p. 46 a codex XL. 76 suddenly appears, though apparently it is only an incorrect reference to the same MS. On p. 19 he speaks quite definitely of two Palatine MSS., 116 and 117, the first of which is unquestionably de Batines' No. XVII. (No. 326 in Palermo's Catalogue, i. p. 545), but then again on p. 28 he identifies No. 117 with Palermo's No. 326.—I confess my inability to find my way through all this confusion. The Palatine MSS. have suffered to a quite unusual extent from the

misfortune already referred to of re-numbering. I find a No. 116 and a No. 117 amongst the Guadagni MSS. which are incorporated with them. They correspond to Palermo's Nos. 328 and 327, and the first of them to de Batines' No. 172 (its library number being 228). But according to the entirely reliable statement of the French bibliographer this No. 116 is a copy of Franc. da Buti's Commentary, while No. 117 (de Batines, ii. p. 350, No. III.) according to Fanfani, de Batines, and Palermo, is a MS. of the anonymous Commentator lately published by Fanfani from the Riccardian 1016. Palermo, in addition to his No. 326 (de Batines' 176), only gives one other MS. of Jacopo della Lana, the well-known codex formerly belonging to Poggiali, which was No. 104 of the Guadagni MSS., reported to me by the former librarian, Sig. Molini, as No. 108 in the library. It is No. 163 in de Batines, and No. 313 in Palermo. Whether this is a della Lana, however, seems very doubtful from the data supplied by de Batines. See vol. ii. 88 *sq.*, 347.

And now, in conclusion, I will give the corresponding numbers in my list and that of de Batines that refer to Latin translations of della Lana: 35 = XLIII.—36 = XLV. — 37 = XLVI. —38 = XLVII. — 40 = XLVIII. — 41 = XLIX.— 42 = L.—De Batines adds a Paris MS. (No. XLIV.).—Barlow (*Contributions*, pp. 62 *sq.*) gives the further information that in the first-named codex (35 = XLIII.) only the translation of the Commentary on the *Inferno* is by de Bernardis, and the rest by Albericus a Rosate.—Finally, there is one more MS. of this last translation, belonging to Sir Thomas Phillipps, formerly of Middlehill (No. 3620), which however was not written till the year 1564.

The two modern editions of della Lana which Luciano Scarabelli has prepared have already been referred to (see

p. 316 above). I have more than once elsewhere acknowledged the usefulness of his work. It need scarcely be said that its value would have been far greater if the editor had shown more critical tact and philological accuracy. The above pages will add many more to the proofs contained in my other writings of the quite exceptional degree in which he is lacking in both. Now that I have all the three volumes of the second edition lying before me, I could multiply these proofs indefinitely. But there is no need to do so. Scarabelli, on his side, has had to correct a number of misstatements concerning myself in his *errata*. See the *Rivista* printed as a postscript to his third volume, pp. 568 *sq.*

Unfortunately de Batines' publisher, Alberghetti, did not print the translation of the above essay which the French scholar had had prepared for him. Scarabelli was therefore compelled to get another, and it would seem to have been a singularly bad one. The chief monstrosity he extracted from my essay was that I had 'mauled' poor Jacopo 'with perfect fury,' and he hurls himself upon me, full of zeal and indignation against the 'impertinent attack,' as he calls it. All that I think myself called upon to say in reply has appeared in the *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Dante-Gesellschaft*, i. 265-331,[1] and I am quite content to refer the reader to it without further remark.—1869.

[1] An Italian version appeared in the *Politecnico* 1868, February and April, and also as a separate pamphlet, Milan, 1868.

XIV.—ON THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE OTTIMO COMENTO ON DANTE

A LETTER TO MR. SEYMOUR KIRKUP, THE ENGLISH ARTIST AT FLORENCE, LEIPZIG, 1847

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. i. pp. 399-417 (1869).]

HALLE ON THE SAALE,
Nov. 20*th*, 1846.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,—I need not tell you with how much pleasure I have read the remarkable work of Mons. le Vicomte de Batines on two early Commentaries on the *Divine Comedy*, which I only received on the 11th of this month. The learned Dantist has added a special charm to his work by placing on its brow your own name, so dear to all students of the supreme bard who are happy enough to know you.

Not so long ago, the study of these excellent old Commentators, imbued in greater or smaller degree with that same mediæval learning in which Dante was more profoundly versed than any other, lay neglected, forgotten, and buried. Neither Lombardi, nor Biagioli, nor their contemporaries, ever consulted those expositors who might have learnt the sense which the author himself intended to attach to his mystic poem from the living voice of Dante or from immediate tradition. When, twenty-three years ago, I attempted to call back the attention of scholars to

this study, and in my first essay on Dante [1] gave a catalogue of fourteen ancient Commentaries, adding the enumeration of manuscripts in which they lay unedited, many readers were astonished at their number. Now the researches of scholars have extended our knowledge so much that this list could only excite commiseration by its meagreness and imperfection.

Alessandro Torri, who has rendered such signal services to every branch of the study of Dante, was the first to edit the Commentary hitherto regarded as the oldest of all. His work indeed was less satisfactory than we might have wished, but the new editor (Sign. Francesco Cerrotti of Rome) will certainly feel himself called on to correct its many errors and fill in its many gaps.

Sign. Ignazio Moutier made us an acceptable present when he reprinted the Commentary wherein Boccaccio, already verging on infirmity, breathed out his passionate love for Father Allighieri. This edition removed many of the blots which deformed the first Florentine, or rather Neapolitan edition.[2]

Nor can we deny a certain interest to the publication of a Commentary on the first cantica, composed towards the middle of the fifteenth century by Guiniforto delli Bargigi, which we owe to the avvocato Zacheroni. It would perhaps have been yet more cordially received, if the fastidious editor had not thought proper to suppress those parts of the work which, to his way of thinking, seemed trifling or inane.

[1] *Hermes, oder Kritisches Jahrbuch der Literatur*, 1824, vol. xxii. pp. 134-166. The list referred to in the text is on pp. 139, 140. [See p. 26 of this vol.]

[2] I wish I could say 'all,' and that the illustrious editor had availed himself of certain corrections suggested before his reprint appeared. Compare, for example, Dionisi (iv. 30, 99) with Moutier's text on pp. 8, 49, 50. It is still less satisfactory to see certain errors in the new edition, from which the former one was free, as we shall observe in cases cited further on.

But of greater importance than all that these meritorious scholars have published amongst them is the Commentary attributed to Dante's son Peter, which we owe to your illustrious fellow-countryman, the Mæcenas of Dante studies, G. G. Warren, Lord Vernon. The work has been executed, and enriched with learned notes, by that deep student of early Italian letters, Nanucci.[1]

I pass in silence over more than one elegant essay on one or another of the ancient Commentators, and turn at once to the tone-giving letter of Mons. le Vicomte de Batines.[2] Were they not too flattering, I would repeat the words with which the illustrious bibliographer of Dante speaks (p. 141) of a work of my own on the same subject, printed nineteen years ago in the Vienna *Jahrbücher*.[3] Naturally it gave me the greatest satisfaction to learn that the profound studies of so distinguished a scholar, carried through in the very midst of the treasures amassed in the libraries of Florence, served to confirm nearly every point which I had then ventured to urge from almost the remotest con-

[1] Five codices have been carefully collated by Signor Nanucci, with a view to securing a correct text. Two others are referred to by him. A copy of the codex of S. Giustina, which seems to be lost, might have been found amongst Dionisi's books in the Biblioteca Capitolare of Verona. Two other manuscripts of Pietro di Dante exist in the Barberini Library at Rome (Pelli, *Memorie per la vita di Dante*, ed. 2, p. 174, Note 53; Rezzi, *Lettera sopra i comenti MSS. Barberiani*, pp. 6, 27), and yet another is to be found amongst the Paris MSS. (*Fonds de réserve*, No. 4). It is said in the learned preface, page 15, that Pietro's Commentary was composed in 1340, and this is very true of the greater part of the work (consult also p. 656). The notes on the last Cantos of the *Paradiso*, however, as may be inferred from p. 704, were not written till 1341.

Any one who should follow Lord Vernon's example, and give publicity to the Commentary attributed to Jacopo di Dante, or the Commentary of Francesco da Buti, the most extensive of them all, and the one most frequently used by the compilers of the *Vocabolario*, or finally the complete Commentary of Benvenuto da Imola, would certainly confer the most acceptable boon on all lovers of these studies. [All these are now printed. See p. 27 of this vol.—ED.]

[2] In his *Studi inediti su Dante*, vol. i. (Fir. 1846), pp. 133-158.

[3] Vol. xliv. 1828, pp. 1-43.

fines of Germany (viz. Breslau). The results of the Vicomte's labours are set forth by him on pages 156 and 157. They are four in number: 1. The Commentary of Jacopo della Lana printed at Vendelino's and at Nidobeato's presses, is identical with the so-called Visconti commentary. 2. This Commentary differs from the *Ottimo* and from that of Dante's son Jacopo. 3. It is probably of earlier date than the *Ottimo*. 4. The *Ottimo* only partially deserves the distinguishing title of the 'Antico' which has been conferred upon it. (It appears from pages 143 *sq.* that M. de Batines considers the text published by Torri, at least in part, subsequent to 1351.) It is not a primitive Commentary, but an epitome of several others compiled by two, if not three, different hands.

Now the first three of these points coincide exactly with the opinions I had expressed in the work referred to. The only difference that might be discovered is that whereas the French scholar attempts to show that Jacopo della Lana wrote before 1349, I believe myself to have fixed his date with historical certainty as earlier than 1328. Further, I agree that the *Ottimo* cannot be regarded as a primitive Commentary. The only point, therefore on which the Vicomte's studies have led him to embrace an opinion differing from my own is the date of the *Ottimo Comento*, which I believe, in agreement with previous authors, to be 1333 or 1334, and M. de Batines places some twenty years later.

I should not hesitate for a single moment to withdraw an opinion expressed so many years ago, or rather repeated on the strength of the current belief rather than adopted on any grounds of my own, did the arguments against it strike me as valid.[1] But I am sorry to say that this is not the

[1] Amongst the many mistakes in my former essay was one noted by M. de Batines (p. 135), viz. the statement that Alberico de Rosciate, who really died in 1354, did not survive 1345. But M. le Vicomte is

case, and I appeal to your clear judgment to put me right or to confirm me in my opinion. But before setting out my own arguments I would beg your sympathetic consideration if any important contribution to the subject has escaped me, bereft as I am of all literary resources beyond what are supplied by my own poor library.

The arguments in support of the belief that the *Ottimo Comento* was composed in 1333 and 1334 are the following:

1. The author says that he was personally present at an event which happened a little after 2nd June 1307:[1]

Inf. xxviii. 55. 'This Fra Dolcino . . . was captured, and in the above said place [Novara], with sister Margherita and many of his followers, was burnt to death; and I, the writer, saw some of his followers burnt to death at Padua, to the number of twenty-two at a time, folk of low condition, unlearned, and peasants.'

2. He refers to his personal acquaintance with the poet:

Inf. x. 85. 'I, the writer, have heard Dante say that never did rhyme draw him to say other than he had purposed to say,

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wrong in attributing the Latin translation of Jacopo della Lana, contained in the Ambrosian MS. D 539, to Alberigo, in spite of my definite statement to the contrary (Vienna *Jahrbücher*, *loc. cit.*, p. 39). No small number of MSS. of the *Ottimo* were discovered by M. de Batines and added to the list which I had drawn up in 1828, though some of them contain no more than fragments of the Commentary; and others had been indicated in my dissertation (p. 34, No. 8; p. 36, No. 28). Further, if M. le Vicomte (p. 153) wants 'a third opinion' on the two codices of San Daniele del Friuli and of Venice (Library of San Marco, No. 56), I am happy to be able to assure him that they both contain the *Ottimo Comento* in the same form as that in which the Riccardian 1004 presents it.

[1] It would seem then that in 1334 he cannot have been very young. Torri thinks otherwise (Preface, p. xiii), on the strength of the note to verse 89 of Canto vii. of the *Inferno*; but he seems not to have observed that it is not the anonymous Commentator himself, but Ser Graziolo de Bambagioli, Chancellor of Bologna, whom he is quoting, that speaks in this passage of 'his youth.'

but that many a time and oft he had made words say in his rhymes other than they were wont to express in the works of the other poets.'

Inf. xiii. 144. 'He [Dante] was of Florence, wherefore he here tells us of a false opinion which the ancient folk of that city entertained; concerning which I, the writer, having questioned him, heard him thus relate.'

3. The Commentator speaks of John of Bohemia, who died at the battle of Crecy, 26th August 1346, as still living:

Par. xix. 124. 'The kingdom [Bohemia] passed to a new succession of strangers, first to Albert, then to the Emperor Henry, whose son John now wears the crown.'

4. He cites the painter Giotto, who died in 1336, as still living:

Purg. xi. 94. 'Giotto was and is supreme above all painters known to man; and he is of that same city of Florence, and his works bear him witness in Rome, Naples, Venice, and Padua, and many other parts of the world.'

5. In the last portion of his work he refers to the year 1333 as current, or only just past:

Par. xii. 79. 'To whom (St. Dominic) there succeeded as minister-general . . . sixteenth in order, brother Hugo Valsamano, elected but now in 1333.'

['*Al quale nel ministerio generale succedette . . . decimosesto frate Ugo di Valsamano, al presente eletto nel* 1333.']

6. He speaks of this same year as 'the year just past' in a note on *Inf.* xiii. 144:

'It (the Ponte Vecchio) fell on the night of the fourth day of November in 1333, the year just passed'[1] (the Laurentian codex xl. 19 says 23 [*ventitrè*], but see Giov. Villani's *Chronicle*, xi. 1, and Dionisi, *Anedd.*, v. 86, note 1, Aless. Torri in his preface to the *Ottimo*, p. xiii, note 3).

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1 We must of course remember that in the Florentine usage the year 1333 did not end till the close of March 1334.

7. And again, another note on a verse in the same Cantica (xix. 115) refers to the year 1334:

'Niccola Orsini . . . induced the Emperor Rudolph to confer on him the privilege of Romagna and Bologna, the effect of which privilege Bertrand, bishop of Ostia and of Velletro, Legate of the Apostolic Church, was made to feel, on March 17th, 1333,[1] as I was engaged upon this Commentary, for he was foully cast out from his lordship by the Bolognese.'[2]

8. A copy of the first preface to the *Ottimo Comento* on the *Paradiso*, made, as I believe, by Pinelli, and preserved in a Venetian codex in the Library of San Marco (No. 55), appends the date of the last day of February 1333, equivalent to 1334 in the ordinary reckoning. In close conformity to this is a notice which the anonymous author of a letter contained in a manuscript of the Ambrosian Library at Milan (S. *infra*, 94) says he extracted from a manuscript from which Pier del Nero had removed the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* (can this be Sign. Libri's codex?), leaving him only the *Paradiso*. This is the note as it stands in the MS.: 'In the name of God, Amen, and of the Virgin Mother, my Lady Santa Maria, and of all their blessed Saints. In the year of the Lord M.CCC.XXX.III.' [though it appears the manuscript really has VII.], 'on the last day of the month of February. Here begins the disposition [*dispositione*, but we must read or understand *sposizione* = exposition] of the third book of Dante Alighieri of Florence, the which treats of such as be in Paradise.' (Then follows the preface to the Commentary on the *Paradiso*.)

All these passages (most of which, for the matter of that, had already been cited by other writers on the *Ottimo Comento*, before me) concur in stamping it as the work of a contemporary of the poet, begun, it would seem, with the

[1] Florentine use = 1334 in the ordinary use.
[2] Cf. Villani, *Chronicle*, xi. 6.

two concluding cantiche, and ended with the *Inferno*, for the passages cited under Nos. 6 and 7 refer to a time posterior to the date of the preface of the *Paradiso* (No. 8). Now we might admit that a single passage, or even two, might have been adopted by a later compiler making extracts from the works of others, and carelessly copying down to the very words that gave the date of the original writer; but nine or ten proof passages all in perfect agreement must convince us that the work from which they are drawn is all from one hand, and that at most some few subsequent additions have been grafted upon it.

And if, in spite of all this, I have expressed my agreement with M. de Batines that the *Ottimo* is not a primitive Commentary, it is because I believe (and have already shown in my earlier essay) that its anonymous author took as the foundation of his work the Commentary of Jacopo della Lana, sometimes copying it word for word, sometimes abbreviating it, sometimes adding matter of his own, or notes taken from other Commentators. But a work composed with the aid of others need not be a mere mosaic of fragments, gathered from this source and that by some ignorant copyist. It is true enough, for the rest, that the author of the *Ottimo Comento* did not always work on the same method. For example, we find some sections in the *Purgatorio* copied straight from Jacopo (for example, the Commentary on the first six cantos); others that only have a few extracts therefrom combined with the author's own work (as, for instance, the Commentary on Cantos vii., xi.-xix.); and yet others in which no trace of the Bolognese Commentary is to be found at all (Cantos viii.-x., xx.-xxxiii.).[1] What can have been the cause of such diversity of treatment I confess it is most difficult to divine.

To these passages, only a few of which he cites, M. de

[1] I believe this account is more accurate than the one given by de Batines on pp. 152-154.

Batines opposes certain others, which we must now proceed to examine. The first occurs in the very note on a verse of the *Inferno* (xiii. 144) to which I have myself twice referred in support of my own opinion. M. de Batines gives it thus:

'When the bridge on which the statue was placed fell, as it fell on the night of the 4th day of November 1333, the year just passed, the said statue having fallen into the said river of Arno, remained there for many years.'

['*Caduto il ponte, sopra 'l quale era la statua, siccome cadde la notte del dì 4 di Nov. 1333 anno prossimo passato, la detta statua caduta nel detto fiume d'Arno vi stette dentro per molti anni.*']

If then, argues M. le Vicomte, the Commentator can tell us that the statue of Mars had been left in the river many years after 1333, it must have been many years after this time that he lived and wrote. And indeed, at first sight, this argument appears unanswerable.

Are we then to admit that M. de Batines is justified in reproaching all who have 'cited this passage to justify the antiquity of the *Ottimo*' with having failed to notice the words which immediately follow? We will see. But first let us re-read the whole passage, beginning a little further back:

'The ancients were of opinion that the city of Florence was founded when . . . Mars was Lord of the hour; wherefore Mars was made its patron, and in his honour . . . a stone statue was made . . . to which they rendered a certain idolatrous reverence and honour. And they said that any perturbation which the said statue encountered would be encountered also by the city. Wherefore when the bridge on which the statue was fell

(as it fell on the night of the 4th day of November in 1333, the year just passed),

the said statue having fallen into the said river of Arno, remained there for many years. Within which time the aforesaid city had many wars, and was the loser in them all, insomuch that counsel was taken to change its site. . . . A young physician recounted

what he had heard . . . of this statue, and counselled . . . that it should be searched out again and replaced in its position. . . . And so it was done. Then things went prosperously, whereby the opinion was confirmed . . . that when the statue had perturbations that the city of Florence likewise had them.'

The 'many years,' then, during which the statue of Mars was left in the Arno did not immediately precede the period at which the anonymous Commentator wrote, but passed between the fall of the bridge and the happy counsel, whereby the physician, like a second Camillus, succeeded in holding back the inhabitants of Florence when they had actually resolved to migrate. Then followed other times, rich in prosperous success for the Florentines. And these times, too, had long passed away when the *Ottimo Comento* (with its constant references to the misfortunes encountered by the Florentines) was written. It appears further that each of these three periods, so far from being limited to a few years, stretched over centuries. What are we to say then? Did all these things come to pass after 1333? And are we driven to suppose that the anonymous Commentator wrote in (say) the seventeenth century?—Or dare we hint that the scholar who takes the 'many years' as posterior to 1333 'failed to notice the words that immediately follow'?

If I am not mistaken there is abundant evidence a mere glance at which will suffice to decide the question. Let us listen first to Giovanni Villani's *Chronicle*:

II. 1. 'The idol of the god Mars which the Florentines took from the temple and set upon a tower [whence Dante's "the city which changed her first patron for the Baptist"], then fell into the Arno and abode there as long as the city remained in ruins ["many years"]. And thus was destroyed the noble city of Florence by the infamous Totila on the 28th day of June in the year of Christ 450.'

III. 1. 'Certain gentlemen and nobles of the region round about Florence . . . ordained to send to Rome ambassadors . . . to Charles the Emperor and Pope Leo, and to the Romans . . . praying them to call to remembrance . . . Florence . . . to the

end it might be built. . . . Their petition (was) accepted. . . . And thus they began to rebuild the city of Florence . . . and this was the year of Christ 801, in the beginning of the month of April [compare Dante's "those citizens who reared her once again on the cinders left by Attila"]. And it is said [compare the *Ottimo's* "young physician"] that the ancients were of opinion that it would not be possible to rebuild it, if first there were not found and drawn from the Arno the marble image consecrated by the first Pagan builders by necromacy to Mars, the which had been in the river of Arno from the destruction of Florence unto that time ["many years"]; and being found, it was placed on a pillar upon the side of the said river, where now is the head of the Ponte Vecchio [compare Dante's "at the passage of the Arno still remains some semblance of him"], . . . but it was commonly said by the ancients, that, if it was disturbed, the city needs must encounter great disturbance.'

XI. 1. 'In the year of Christ 1333 . . . on Thursday . . . the 4th day of November the Arno was so swollen as it passed the city of Florence that it covered the whole plain of S. Salvi. . . . At the hour of vespers . . . it broke the dam of Ognissanti . . . and straightway the bridge at the Carraja collapsed and fell . . . and straightway after fell the bridge of Santa Trinità . . . and then the Ponte Vecchio. . . . And there fell into the Arno the statue of Mars, which was on the pedestal at the foot of the said Vecchio, on this side. And note concerning Mars that the ancients said and left in writing that whenever the statue of Mars should fall or should be disturbed the city of Florence should have great jeopardy and revolution.'

And should any one refuse belief to the best of the Italian Chroniclers we may call Messer Giovanni da Certaldo to his support:

Comento a Dante, xiii. 144, ed. Moutier, iii. 148, 149 [ed. Milanesi, ii. 352, 353]. 'Now when the citizens had become Christians and relinquished their Pagan errors this statue of Mars was taken out of the said temple and . . . set upon a pedestal erected by the side of the Ponte Vecchio. . . . And on this tower it stood until the time when Attila destroyed the city, and then . . . this statue fell into the Arno, and therein it remained until they were at pains to rebuild the city. Then when it was rebuilt in the time . . . of Charles the Great, the

statue was fished out again and re-discovered, but not complete, because from the waist down the statue of Mars had been broken [Dante's "that stone torso which guards the bridge"] . . . and thus mutilated, they say that it was placed upon a pedestal at the head of the Ponte Vecchio, from which afterwards in the year of Christ 1333' (so rightly the edition of 1724 [and Milanesi's edition], whereas the modern reprint [of 1831] reads 1343). '. . . The Arno being swollen ("being swollen" is omitted in Moutier's edition), . . . swept away the Ponte Vecchio and the pedestal and the statue, which was never afterwards found nor sought.'

Closely resembling this is Benvenuto da Imola's note given in Muratori's *Antiquitates*, i. 1056.

I am persuaded that even without these parallel passages, which seem to close the controversy, you would have had no hesitation as to the true meaning of the *Ottimo's* words. In speaking of the first fall of the Ponte Vecchio, which took place in the time of Attila, this ancient author parenthetically inserts a brief mention of the similar event in very recent times. From your own house you will have identified the very point on which the tower thrown down by Attila rose, and the site of the column which served as the pedestal three centuries and a half later when the equestrian statue was dragged out of the river, to fall once more five centuries odd later, never to be found again. You will agree with me that the words which M. de Batines cites in proof of the later date of the *Ottimo Comento*, when rightly understood, serve as the strongest argument in support of the opposite opinion, and clearly show that this passage can only have been written in the year directly following the inundation of 1333.

But I must not omit to mention that another passage in the same Commentary might lead us to think that the first fall mentioned by the anonymous writer must have taken place much later than the commonly received tradition supposed. In his note on another verse of the *Divine*

Comedy, in whith Dante refers to the statue of Mars, (*Paradiso* xvi. 145), we read these words:

'And he says "the stump" because it was broken and corroded by the long period during which it was plunged in the waters of Arno, when the Ponte Vecchio fell in the year 1178, on the 25th November; after which it was placed in position again by them of Semifonte who were in the neighbourhood.'

And in fact we know from other sources that about this time there was a great flood of the Arno, which swept down the Ponte Vecchio:

Ricordano Malespini, *Istoria Fiorentina*, cap. 80. '. . . This was in June in the year of Christ 1177 . . . and this same year, by reason of excessive abundance of water in the Arno, the Ponte Vecchio was thrown down, and this was a sign of future disasters to our city.'

The same words, letter for letter, also appear in the *Chronicle* of Giov. Villani (v. 8).—To confess my own opinion, I imagine that in his note on the *Paradiso* the old Commentator reports the historical fact, and in illustrating the verses of the *Inferno* put into the mouth of the man who 'made a gibbet of his own house,' he draws upon the popular tradition reported to him, as he says, by Allighieri himself. But be this as it may, whether the 'many years' passed between the time of Attila and that of Charles the Great, or between 1178 and the time at which the neighbours from Semifonte fished up the 'stone stump' again, it is at any rate perfectly certain that they were not subsequent but anterior to 1333.

Let us now pass on to M. de Batines' second argument, based upon the following note on verse 100 of the 23rd canto of the *Purgatory*:

'It will be necessary for the friars and the members of the religious orders to command (the Florentine women) to wear such clothes as not wantonly to expose their breasts and bosoms. And so it was; for it was in 1351, a certain Messer Agnolo Acciaioli, being bishop.'

I might answer that M. le Vicomte asserts on page 154 that the notes on Canto xiii. of the *Purgatory* do not belong to the 'really original part of the Commentary,' and therefore has no right to draw arguments from them as to the date of the whole work; but I take it that even if we regard these notes in a general way as a legitimate part of the anonymous Commentary we may still retain our conviction that the *Ottimo Comento* was composed before 1351. It is very certain that the Laurentian codex (xl. 19), from which Professor Torri took the text he printed, is far from faithfully representing the original work. Many gaps, not only of a few words, but of whole notes, occur (for example *Purg.* xxviii. 115, 127, 134), and at the same time not a few subsequent additions from other works have been inserted, as in *Purg.* viii. 61, 67, xi. 109 *sq.*, xv. 87, xxii. 130 *sq.* Now it seems highly probable that the last words of the note just quoted are an addition of this kind from a later hand. For the very expression 'and so it was, for it was' (*e così fu, che fu*), seems much too rude for the *Ottimo*. Moreover the notices which he gives us are distinguished by their great precision as to the facts they record, whereas in this case Angelo Acciajoli having ceased to occupy the episcopal chair of Florence in the year 1345 (Vic. de Batines, *l.c.* p. 149, note 37), there is in any case an obvious mistake in the note which we suppose to be an insertion. It would appear that the Florentine women dressed very indecently in the fourteenth century, as we gather, to say nothing of other evidence, from the passionate expostulations of Boccaccio against the customs of the people of his time, men as well as women (*Comento a Dante*, Allegorie del canto v., ed. Moutier, ii. 72 *sq.* [ed. Milanesi, i. 497 *sq.*]). Such a scandal might well provoke repeated ecclesiastical censures; and there is every reason to believe that the prophecy contained in the passage of the *Purgatorio* just recited, like other prophecies in the

Divine Comedy, refers to a fact which had already come to pass when the poet wrote. Villani (ix. 245) tells us that the umpires chosen in the month of April 1324 'made many orders and severe regulations against the dissolute adornments of the women of Florence.' Other laws and other prohibitions of which the records are lost may well have been issued. There is nothing more natural therefore than that the possessor of a copy of Dante should have added to the note on this prophetic verse the mention of a similar decree of more recent date.

It would be natural now to proceed to ask whether the arguments, on the strength of which the *Ottimo Comento* has been generally regarded as dating from 1334, have or have not been adequately refuted by M. de Batines. But I really do not find that he has assailed any of them except the one given above under No. 5; and even this he does not seem to me to have refuted, but at most only to have weakened it. He thinks (p. 149) that 'this passage has not been properly punctuated by the editor of the *Ottimo*, and it would be better to put the comma after the words "al presente," so that the sense and reading would be: "Ugo di Valsamano, the present general of the order of S. Francis, elected in 1333."' I note in passing the error by which S. Francis is substituted for S. Dominic, and leave it to the judgment of the learned countrymen of the *Ottimo* to decide whether an elliptical expression such as M. de Batines supposes is in accordance with the genius of the Italian language. But in any case it is evident that even if the note so interpreted no longer forces us to suppose that it was written in 1333, or immediately after, it still remains incontestable that it cannot have been written after the death of Valsamano. That is to say, it must be earlier not only than 1351, but than 1341 (de Batines, *op. cit.* note 38).

If you agree with me that, so far, we have found no argument to prove that the *Ottimo Comento* must have been

later than 1334, it only remains to examine the question whether the author of the Commentary on the *Paradiso* is a different man from the author of the notes on the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*. On this point M. de Batines (p. 149) says:

'I shall show later on, by the colophons of two codices, that the Commentary on the *Paradiso* is a compilation from different Commentaries, and, moreover, was drawn up by a completely different author.'

And on p. 154:

'As for the Commentary on the *Paradiso*, it is evidently by another author, and the proof of it may be found not only in the number . . . of manuscripts containing it alone, but also by the following colophon with which the Commentary ends in the Magliabecchian codex of the fourteenth century, written in folio on paper (cod. of S. Marco, No. 121):

> Here end the notes collected and compiled by A. L. N. F. on the *Comedy* of Dante Alleghieri of Florence, in praise of Christ. Amen.

And an exactly similar superscription stands at the end of the Vatican codex, No. 4776, of the close of the fourteenth century, in folio on paper.'[1]

The assertion of M. de Batines that the Commentary on the *Paradiso* is a compilation from different authors, seems then to be based simply upon the words 'collected and compiled' which we read in the colophon to the two codices, but I imagine that these expressions are nothing but a modest way of saying 'composed and written,' and the examples given by the *Crusca*, under the word '*compilare*,' confirm

[1] This account of the Vatican MS. corresponds to one which I received some years ago from Rome. But it seems that the codex is parchment, not paper. The subscription is essentially similar to that of the Magliabecchian codex, only differing from it in matters of no importance:

> 'End of the notes corrected and compiled by A. L. N. F. on the comedy of Dante Alleghieri, citizen of Florence. To the honour and praise of Christ, Amen.'

Some interlinear notes in Spanish, apparently by the scribe who wrote the codex, lead one to suppose that either the copyist, or the first owner of the book, was a Spaniard.

me in this opinion. We have seen that the Commentary on the *Inferno*, the authenticity of which is beyond doubt, is not primitive in any such sense as to imply that every note is actually the offspring of the mind of the writer of the *Ottimo Comento*. Indeed, I have pointed out above how freely the anonymous Commentator made use of Jacopo della Lana's Commentary, and we note from other passages that he also availed himself of the notes of Graziolo de' Bambagioli and of Accorso Bonfantini. If we are to insist on the words 'collected and compiled,' therefore, understanding them in the sense that M. de Batines gives them, we should have a perfect right to say that the Commentary on the *Inferno* is also a compilation from different Commentaries. Now, when we carefully examine the notes of the *Ottimo* on the *Paradiso*, I think we shall recognise the same hand and the same method as in the Commentary on the two earlier cantiche. Here, too, della Lana's work serves as a basis. Here, too, the notes taken from him are in part abbreviated and corrected by a writer who is better versed in history and in the Latin classics. Here too we find, both in the preface of the Venetian codex of San Marco, and in the notes themselves, the date of 1334 recurring in all the three divisions of the work. I cannot see, therefore, why we should attribute the Commentary on the *Paradiso* to another author.

Elaborating the conjecture of Mehus, M. le Vicomte observes (p. 154) that if we are to suppose the letters which occur in the two codices cited above to be the initials of the author's name, we may with high probability expand them as:

Andrea Lancia Notar Fiorentino.

This strikes me as a brilliant conjecture, and it reflects high credit on the French scholar. But I do not see why, if the author's name has been discovered in the Commentary on the *Paradiso*, the notes on the other two cantiche should

be left unfathered. Even before I knew of M. de Batines' discovery, I considered the opinion that the anonymous Commentator belonged to one of the religious orders mistaken. It was on the following note that Torri attempted to base this idea:

Purg. xxvi. 97. 'The word "father" is applied in virtue of *generation*, as "Abraham was the father of Isaac"; in virtue of *age*, as when we say "the holy fathers"; in virtue of *profession*, as here the abbot is "father" of the monks.'

Torri believes that this 'here' (*qui*) refers to the monastery in which the Commentator was living; but I take the genesis of the phrase to be as follows: 'We call "fathers" those who are not so by generation, as for instance the "holy fathers" who have passed into the better life so many centuries ago, and *here* too, in this life, we call abbots "fathers."' The many accurate references to the *Corpus juris Romani*, which occur in all portions of the work, have long convinced me that the author of the *Ottimo Comento* was a lawyer (*Purg.* viii. 70, xiii. 106, xix. 133; *Par.* vi. 10). And if the purity of his language did not suffice to prove him a native of Tuscany, I think we should have more positive evidence of it in the following note:

Purg. xiii. 112. 'Oh, how many times in this province of Tuscany have such prayers been made by evil citizens because they have not such distinctions as they would.'

Everything, therefore, combines to show that Andrea Lancia, living in the fourteenth century (*ineunte saeculo xiv.*, says Mehus, *Vita Ambr. Camald.*, p. clxxxiii.), the author of many translations of the Latin poets and prose writers, was the Tuscan lawyer, so well versed in classical literature, who composed the *Ottimo Comento*, in 1334.

I hope you will kindly accept these few observations, and believe me ever to be your most devoted and affectionate servant and friend.

XV.—CONVIVIO OR CONVITO?

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 574-580 (1879).]

ALL the recent editions of Allighieri's chief work in prose, from that of Biscioni (1723) downwards, entitle it '*Il Convito*.' But this is not the case with the four earlier editions. The Florentine edition of 1490, and the three Venetian editions of 1521, 1529, and 1531, entitle it the *Convivio*. So also does Boccaccio in his Life of the poet (Milanesi's edition, p. 67): 'He also composed a comment, in prose, in the Florentine vernacular, on three of his canzoni distese . . . and this, which he entitled *Convivio*, is a full beauteous work and worthy of praise.' Landino, in the Proem to his *Commentary* (1481), follows the same usage: 'He wrote in the Florentine tongue the *Convivio* and the *Vita Nuova*'; and Vellutello (1544) does the same. We find the same title in Varchi's *Ercolano* (1730, published by Tartini and Franchi, pp. 433, 434), in Salviati's *Avvertimenti* (1584), in Pergamini's *Memoriale* (1602), and in the first four editions of the *Vocabolario* (1612, 1623, 1691, and 1729). It is only when we come to the 'Table' of the fifth impression (1843) that we read '*Il Convito, o il Convivio*.' *Convivio* is also the form adopted by Crescimbeni (1698), Monsign. Fontanini (1736),[1] Pelli (1758), Tiraboschi, and many others.

[1] In the *Bibliotheca dell' eloquenza Italiana* Fantanini cites in favour of his view the further authority of Tasso and of Anton Maria Salvini, which I really am not in a position to verify.—With regard to the edition of the *Prose di Dante e Boccaccio*, Apostolo Zeno adds in a note, 'This most valuable edition . . . seems to have been lightly thought of by Monsignore, partly because it says *Convito* and not *Convivio*, and partly because,' etc.—Perhaps after all he may prove right in this.

Which of the two forms then are we to consider genuine, and given by the author himself to his work?

In the first of his notes to the *Divine Comedy*, Foscolo rightly indicates the method to be followed in solving this question, although the answer he himself gives is erroneous. With reference to the question whether the subdivisions of the great work are to be called 'canti' or 'capitoli,' he says, 'We must take our stand with Dante, who expressly divides his poem into cantiche and canti. . . . But it is strange that the most rapt admirers of the poet trifle with the titles of his works. "The present work is called *Convito*, and so I would have it be."—*Convito*, p. 67, Zatta ed. . . . And yet, without any proof, or so much as a conjecture (not an improbable one, maybe, if any one had made it), that the amanuenses have made a blunder in the text, some one prints *Convivio*, and almost every one else (?) follows him.'

Well then, it may be said, if the author himself tells us how he would have the important work in question named, how can we possibly doubt what we are to call it?—Surely nothing is more reasonable. But I note that the passage cited by Foscolo (i. 1 : 80 in Giuliani's ed.) is not the only one in which Allighieri tells us what the book is to be called. There are four others in this very chapter, which appear thus in Giuliani's edition: (1) Line 60, 'Intendo fare un generale *Convito*.' (2) Line 62, 'Senza lo quale [pane] da loro [cosi fatta vivanda] non potrebbe esser mangiata a questo *Convito*.' (3) Line 73, 'La vivanda di questo *Convito* sara di quattordici maniere ordinata'; and finally, line 99, 'Li quali [a questa cena convitati] priego tutti che se il *Convito* non fosse tanto splendido,' etc. We may add a fifth passage from i. 2 : 1, 'Nel principio di ciascun bene ordinato *Convito*'; a sixth from chapter 10 : 2, 'Grande vuolo essere la scusa, quando a cosi nobile *Convito* per le sue vivande, a cosi onorevole per li suoi convitati si

pone pane di biado'; and finally, a seventh in the fourth Tractate, 22 : 5, 'Ond io volendo a cotale imperio [delli morali Filosofi] essere obbediente, intendo questo mio *Convito* per ciascuna delle sue parti rendere utile.'

It cannot be denied that in all these passages, amounting to eight, our editions agree with Giuliani in reading '*Convito*' and not '*Convivio*.' But the editions are not the decisive authority in a question of orthography. The best manuscripts alone can determine it. Now of the twenty-nine manuscripts examined on this point by myself, or by qualified persons at my request, there are only two—the Riccardian No. 1043 and that of San Marco, Cl. x. No. 26 (107)—which write '*Convito*' in the passages where the word occurs. The first of them bears the very late date of 1461, and cannot be regarded as having any great importance. The second has been successively in the possession of Luca di Simone della Robbia, Anton Maria Biscioni, and the commentator Farsetti. This copy likewise is of the fifteenth century, and the Milanese editors of the *Convivio* (1827) consider it less important than the other manuscript of the Library of San Marco, Cl. xi. No. 34, which once belonged to the Casa Nani.—A third codex, also of the fifteenth century, in the Bodleian at Oxford, No. 114. 3,[1] has '*Chonuiuio*' both on the title-page and in the superscription of the whole work; but apparently has '*conuito*' or '*chonuito*,' like the old editions, in the text itself.[2]—And further, here and there a manuscript which usually reads '*Convivio*' has '*Convito*' in one or two of the eight passages, obviously through inadvertence. For instance, the second

[1] Mortara, *I codici italiani della bibl. Canonici*, p. 129.

[2] I am indebted for an account of it to Dr. E. Moore, of whom I have spoken elsewhere. He tells me the title reads 'Chomincia una expositione di Dante Alighieri poeta fiorentino sopra tre sue Chanzone chiamato *chonuiuio*.' It is so written in the title-page of the whole MS. In Tratt. i. ch. 1 the word is written "*chonuito*" in the last of the four passages; and in the other three, and also at the beginning of ch. 10, "*conuito*."

of the Trivulzian manuscripts, marked No. 39, has this reading in line 73 of the first chapter; and the variants, now in my hands, copied by Vincenzo Nannucci from the fragmentary manuscript which belonged to Seymour Kirkup, do not note any variant from '*Convito*' in line 80 of the first chapter and line 2 of the tenth chapter; but this may be an oversight.[1] I also note as a curious circumstance that in chapter 2 the Magliabecchian 186, Cl. vi., reads: 'Nel cominciamento di ciascun bene ordinato *prandio*.'

All the other MSS., to the number of twenty-four, give '*convivio*' or '*chonvivio*,' or '*conuiuio*' in all the above-mentioned passages. They are as follows:

I. Florentine:
  A. Laurentian:
    1. Plut. xl. cod. 39.[2] Fifteenth century.
    2. Plut. xl. cod. 40.[3] Fifteenth century.
    3. Plut. xl. cod. 41.[4] Completed September 24th, 1463.
    4. Plut. xc. (Gaddiani) sup. cod. 134.[5] Parchment. Fourteenth century.
    5. Plut. xc. sup. cod. 135. 1.[6] Completed by a certain Matteo Cierretani, December 28th, 1477.
    6. Plut. xc. sup. cod. 135. 2.[7] Fifteenth century.
    7. Plut. xc. inf. cod. 3. 2.[8] Fifteenth century.
  B. Nazionale:
    8. Palch. iii. cod. 47. Fifteenth century.
    9. Palch. iii. cod. 200. Fifteenth century.
    10. Palch. ix. cod. 95. Parchment. Fifteenth century.
    11. Class vi. cod. 186 paper. Perhaps end of fourteenth century.
    12. Palatino, cod. 35 (copied from No. 4).
  C. Riccardian:
    13. Cod. 1041. Written in 1447.
    14. Cod. 1042. Written in 1468.
    15. Cod. 1044. End of fourteenth century.

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[1] Tratt. iv. 22 is wanting in this codex.
[2] Bandini, *Catal. Bibl. Laurent.*, v. p. 42.
[3] *Ibid.*, 43.
[4] *Ibid.*, 43, No. i.
[5] *Ibid.*, 404.
[6] *Ibid.*, 405, No iii.
[7] *Ibid.*, 406.
[8] *Ibid.*, 412, No. ii.

II. Roman:
A. Vatican:
16. Vatican, No. 4778. Fifteenth century.
17. Urbino, No. 686. Parchment. Fifteenth century.
B. Barberini:
18. xlvi. 28. Fourteenth century.

III. Venetian MS. in San Marco:
19. Cl. xi. No. 34. Fourteenth century.

IV. Milanese. Trivulzian:
20. No. 38 (first Trivulzian). Fifteenth century.

V. Parisian. Bibliot. Nationale:
21. Ital. No. 536 (formerly 7764. 3). Parchment.[1]
22. Ital. No. 1014 (formerly 7768). Fourteenth century.[2]

VI. British Museum:
23. . . .[3]

VII. Public Library of Strasburg in Alsace:
24. Paper. Fifteenth century.

The unanimous agreement of at least twenty-four, or rather twenty-six, manuscripts, including the only six which are assigned to the fourteenth century (Nos. 4, 11, 15, 18, 19, and 22), is decisive in favour of '*Convivio*.' The Bodleian manuscript can be reckoned on neither side, for the one form is adopted on the title-page and superscription, and the other in the text. There are therefore only two late manuscripts left to support '*Convito*.'

It may reasonably be asked how it is possible that against such a number of authorities, and against the general usage up to his own time, Biscioni not only adopted the wrong form, but has succeeded in imposing it on all subsequent editions down to our own times. But the enigma begins to yield if we consider that when the *Prose di Dante*

[1] Marsand, *Catal. d. Codici Ital. della regia bibliot.*, ii. p. 125.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 124. See also Giuliani's edition, p. xxxiv.
[3] I owe the account of this MS. also to Dr. Moore, who writes as follows: 'I wrote to a friend at the British Museum, who informs me that there is only one MS. of the *Convito* there, and that the readings are "*chonuiuio*" twice in chap. i., and in the other places, as well as in chap. x., "*conuiuio*."'

e di Boccaccio saw the light one of the two manuscripts which read '*Convito*,' and which the editor reckoned amongst the least miserable, was in his own possession. In his Preface he says: 'The *Vita Nuova* and the *Convito* are printed after the manuscript of Dr. Ant. Maria Biscioni, since it is the best that could be found. This codex, . . . as may be seen from the handwriting, was written in the fifteenth century. . . . Here in Florence I have been unable to find any copy of the fourteenth century, which sufficiently explains why certain passages in these works, and especially in the *Convito*, remain, to my thinking, somewhat obscure.'

The edition of the *Prose di Dante e di Boccaccio* had been out a few years when the Academicians of 1729 registered the collection amongst the editions referred to; and consequently for a whole century afterwards any one who thought of republishing the *Convivio* simply copied Biscioni's edition as servilely as possible. From 1827 onwards we may say that every fresh editor (except the Neapolitan editors of 1839 and 1855) has done something to purify the text of the work; but all by common consent seem to have neglected its title. Not one of them gives the least hint of *Convivio*, even as a variant, in any one of the passages enumerated above.

No doubt Allighieri might, if he had chosen, have entitled the first great prose work of Italian literature *Convito*, or he might, after the example of Plato, have called it *Simposio* or *Pranzo*, or, like Lasca some centuries later, *Cena*; but the fact remains that he expressly declared: 'The present work is called *Convivio*, AND SO I WOULD HAVE IT BE.' We can only add then with the author himself,[1] 'Hoc quidem retinemus et nos, nec posteri nostri permutare valebunt. Racha, racha!'

[1] *El. Vulg.* i. 12 : 34 : 'By this we too abide, nor will posterity have power to change it. Racha, racha!'

XVI.—DANTE AND UNITED ITALY

A LECTURE DELIVERED AND PUBLISHED IN 1861

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 237-273 (1879).]

AUTHOR'S PREFATORY NOTE (1878)

THE seventeen years which have elapsed since I wrote this lecture have brought changes with them which have transformed Italy, and have forced us to take another view of the problems she has to solve. Yet I should be sorry not to include the following essay in this volume, for I believe it contains much that is of significance to our estimate of Dante. I can therefore only hope that the indulgent reader will remember that at the time it was written (during two autumn visits to Italy in the years 1859 and 1860) the outlook appeared melancholy in more than one respect. The country was still in an unsettled state. The prospect of a United Italy was uncertain. Victor Emanuel had been forced to buy Lombardy from Napoleon at the sacrifice of his ancestral possessions, and with them, of the frontier which had bounded the Peninsula for two thousand years; for France's watchword was only 'Italy free *to the Adriatic*.' Three independent states had been annexed without either conquest or treaty, and the attempt to win a twofold kingdom for his liege lord was being made, off his own hand, by a—chivalrous and honourable—Condottiere.

Though the cry for a United Italy, for an end to foreign dominion and the temporal power of the Pope, which now thrills the Peninsula from end to end, was scarcely audible even at the beginning of this century, yet if any modern Italian were asked whence his countrymen drew their inspiration, he would scarcely hesitate to name the greatest poet of his fatherland. It is Dante, he would say, who taught us to look on the whole country whose rivers rise from the watershed of the Apennines, as our common fatherland; it is he who planted the hatred of foreign dominion in our hearts, and it is his eloquence which branded the temporal possessions of the Church of Rome as involving an apostasy from the command of Christ. For centuries, he would add, Dante was a closed book to the Italians, an effeminate sentimentality took the place of manly words and manly deeds, while Cicisbeo breathed Arcadian sonnets to his adored one. But now that Dante's mighty Terzine resound once more from the Alps to the sea, from the Po to the Tiber, self-reliance and self-renouncing enthusiasm have sprung up again in the breasts of his countrymen. The fact that in the days of foreign oppression patriots recognised each other by their love of the immortal poet, and greeted one another as by a secret password, with the inspiring lines of the Divine Poem, is a symbol of the fact that the roots of this temper of mind are to be sought in Dante.

There are of course plenty who will answer by declaring that the causes of all the revolutionary movements in the Western Peninsula are to be found, not in any inspiration derived from a fourteenth-century poet, but simply in the machinations of French agitators and native secret societies, and in the fraudulent allurements of such as Count Cavour.

Putting aside for the moment the question of how far the appeal to Dante is justified, we may at any rate dismiss this latter account of the facts without more ado. It is

contrary to all the teachings of history to suppose that the real roots of so deep-seated a movement should be traced to high-sounding phrases on the lips of foreign emissaries, or the diplomatic arts of a minister, however highly gifted he may be. At the bottom of a movement which has swayed the hearts of millions must be some kind of spiritual force, even were it an erroneous and perverse one. We need not dispute that less pure elements, of every kind, may have led the original impulse aside and taken advantage of it, but it is none the less fallacious to regard these factors as the *cause* of the whole movement.

It is only when we have made our position quite clear in this respect that we can go on to ask whether we are justified in seeking for the germ of this spiritual movement in Dante.

There is nothing intrinsically strange in the idea. Our own people has been roused by its poets, notably by Schiller, to far-reaching action, which has deeply affected the course of history. Why should we be surprised if the same thing took place among a people whose poets have penetrated, as in no other country, to the very deepest strata of the people? And it is a fact that, during the last half-century, a great number of those who aimed at transforming Italy,—and not only men of such moderation as Cesare Balbo, Gino Capponi, or Carlo Troya, but also the democratic revolutionaries who would take the world by storm,—have hung and still hang upon Dante's *Divine Comedy*, with passionate enthusiasm. Ugo Foscolo, who preferred poverty and exile to place and honour under the rule of Austria, devoted the last years of his life exclusively to a great work on the poem; and after Foscolo's death, this new edition of the Prophecy of Italy's Future, as he called the *Comedy*, was published by no other than Giuseppe Mazzini himself.—Gabriel Rossetti, a Carbonaro thrust out of Naples in connection with the events of 1820, spent

thirty years of his exile in developing, through a long series of volumes of extraordinary learning and ingenuity, his theory that Dante was the secret advocate of a political sect, with objects closely allied to those of the Carbonari themselves. Niccolò Tommaséo, who is one of the foremost modern exponents of the *Divine Comedy*, was the very man whose arrest on Jan. 18th, 1848, contributed so essentially to the breaking out of the revolution of March 17th in Venice; a year and a half from that date he and Manin held the reins of the resuscitated Republic of St. Mark. It would be easy to add many names, some of them weighty ones, to these examples of men whose earnest and loving study of the *Divine Comedy* has gone hand in hand with the zeal of the reformer, and even of the revolutionist.

But what are we to say if this very Dante, in the inscription he wrote for his own tombstone, calls himself 'the poet of the Monarchy,' and stood forth as champion of the divinely ordained rights (as they seemed to him), of the Romano-German Empire, not only in a special treatise, but in almost every one of his works? Again, and yet again, he reverts to this one theme, and at the close of his great poem, written it may be but a few months before his death, he celebrates the apotheosis of the last German Emperor, who dared the attempt, unsuccessful though it was, to make his overlordship felt against the warring parties of distracted Italy. And really it is only such convictions that we can bring into harmony with the great task Dante set before him, the task of setting forth the divine ordering of the world for time and eternity, in the sense of the Catholic Church; and it is only this that will explain how for centuries so many great souls, inimical to all revolution in Church or State, have sunk themselves in the *Divine Comedy* with such an insatiable love.

How then is it possible that such widely divergent

tempers of mind should meet in this common admiration? How could one of the noblest German princes of our day love to draw his waters from the same spring with Mazzini?—Let us attempt to discover in how far such a strange unanimity is justified, or where the misunderstanding, or perhaps the intentional deluding, begins.

A glowing love for Italy, a hatred of the foreign, and above all of the Teuton, yoke, and a hatred of the temporal power of the Pope, are the three passions which are traced back to Dante. Let us try to examine them separately.—

'Italy,' Prince Metternich is reported to have said, 'is nothing but a geographical expression.' And in truth there have been whole centuries, during which it was only that—and a very vague expression to boot.

In antiquity, up to the rise of the Empire, the widely differing races of Italy, who did not so much as understand one another's language, only coalesced together under the pressure of the Roman lordship. Worn out by centuries of strife, and depopulated by the destructive system of slave labour, the Peninsula was not rewarded till near the end of the days of the Republic, by some modest measure of privileges as against the Provinces. Even these privileges must be paid for heavily in taxation to the sole profit of the all-devouring Rome; and one of them was that 'gift of the Danai,' the self-government granted to the Italian towns, which sowed the seeds of that lamentable 'church-spire patriotism' which still stirs up town against town in Italy in jealousy and ill-will. But whether the boundaries of Italy are fixed at the Rubicon and the Macra, or stretched to the Alps and the Var, the Roman poet, in whatever part of the Peninsula his cradle may have been rocked, devotes his enthusiastic muse to the glory, not of the common Fatherland, but of the Eternal City. The poets of antiquity bestow well-merited panegyrics on the beauty of the Italian climate, on the fertility of the soil, and the

manly strength of her populace, but we search their pages in vain for a single word of inspiring, self-renouncing love for their common Fatherland. Italy was, and remained, a geographical expression.

The glory of Imperial Rome passed. Italy was first degraded to a dependency of an Empire whose seat had been transferred to the remote East, and then fell a prey to the Northern conquerors. The flames kindled by barbarian hands embraced each other over the temples and palaces of a glorious past. Latium's muse went slowly dumb in face of the shattered images of her gods; and an unrivalled culture, built up through long centuries by the two most gifted peoples of antiquity, was buried in the débris of the great migrations as deep as Herculaneum or Pompeii. The captives by the streams of Babylon had scarce a fitter cause for their songs of mourning than that afforded by this tragic scene of decay. But no such patriotic lamentations rose.[1] Among the latest fruits on the Latin Parnassus we find songs in honour of a barbarian Condottiere instead of laments over the decay of Italian splendour; and a century later yet, the last philosopher and the last statesman give themselves to glorifying the court of the Ostro-Gothic king.

The Roman rule had at least held Italy together, if only in common servitude. Darker times came upon her when she was divided between the Longobardi, the Greek Emperors, and the rising dominion of the Popes. Yet it is just upon these times of outward separation that the first seeds of consciousness of an inner union fell. The Longobardi were domineering strangers, and for near a hundred years the majority of them adhered to the Arian heresy. The native Catholics, feeling the bonds of their faith and nationality stronger than their separation under different

[1] The six-line elegy on Rome published by Muratori belongs to a later period.

overlords, drew nearer together, and learnt to look upon the Bishop of Rome as their common representative. The same phenomenon reappeared in the parts of Italy which had remained Greek, when the iconoclastic Emperors of the Isaurian dynasty attempted to rob their subjects there too of their miracle-working images of the saints, while the Western Church took the adoration of them under her protection. So it was in these iron times that the Italian national character began at least to form itself under the oppression alike of Longobards and Greeks.

Liutprand, one of the last and greatest of the Longobard kings, rewarded the duplicity of the Popes so magnificently that his two grants formed the real nucleus of the later Papal States. Astolf, his second successor, reverted to the old enmity with Papal Rome, wrested back his predecessor's grants, and finally besieged Stephen II. in his terrified city. Then the Pope turned in his dire need to the Frankish king Pipin, with whom he had already entered into close alliance, and not trusting to his own unsupported influence, he forwarded a letter from the Apostle Peter, who had sent it under cover to him from the other world. The Frankish conquest of Northern Italy was the result, and the generous conqueror enlarged Liutprand's grant almost to the limits which the Papal States retained till 1859.

In Pipin's steps followed his greater son, Karl, and it were hard to say whether he who received the crown or he who dared to offer it profited most from Leo III.'s revival of the Western Empire. Some of her ancient glory returned to Italy too, since every Kaiser of the new Western Empire had to receive at the grave of the Apostle that crown on the possession of which alone he could base any claim to be temporal head and judge of the whole of Catholic Christendom. But the pilgrimage to Rome, which for seven centuries no king of the Romans dared to omit,

ever renewed the connection between the transformations of Italy and the wearers of Karl's imperial crown.

Yet the glorious days of Leo and Karl were followed by the darkest times that Italy has ever had to endure. When the Karlovingian dynasty came to an end, almost every semblance of authority vanished throughout Italy. Hundreds of usurpers appeared in the country districts and the cities; and the only right that could make itself respected was that of brute force. Education, morality, and devout belief had disappeared not only from amongst the laity but from the very cloisters. Women whose ambition was only equalled by their dissoluteness dominated Rome generation after generation, and filled Peter's chair with one beardless and unworthy Pope after another. For many decades it seemed as if the temporal power of the Bishop of Rome were to be finally quenched by Alberic, a Roman potentate of Teuton extraction. The Peninsula was devastated by the incursions of the Magyars on the North, while it was pillaged on every other side by the Saracens, who held a wide chain of pirate towns and fastnesses upon the coasts.

It was in these cheerless times that for nearly a century a race of native Princes, the Berengares, Guidos, Lamberts, and Hugos, styled themselves kings of Italy.

It is generally assumed that this kingdom at any rate was the object of a collective sense of patriotism. Yet its princes, even if born in Italy, were of Teutonic, principally Longobard, stock, and their lordship barely embraced the northern half of the Peninsula. The Southern provinces, Greek or Longobard, were independent of the Northern kingdom, as were also the Papal States. And, to say nothing of the Saracens, several cities besides Venice had already won republican independence. And even within its own limits, the kingdom of the Berengars can in no wise be regarded as embodying a sense of Italian nationality. For the

history of these times, though not devoid of chivalrous touches, is for the most part the record of fierce struggles for mastery, carried on with perjury, treachery, appeals for foreign aid, and savage cruelty. At last happier days dawned for Germany and Italy alike, with the accession of the second founder of the Western Empire, our glorious Saxon compatriot, Otto the Great.

In Germany he followed in his father's footsteps in founding cities, while in Italy he established the regular administration of municipal affairs, which is the reason why so many Italian chroniclers begin their record of history, as distinguished from legend, with his reign.

But the brilliant age of the Ottos, which extended the German boundaries far beyond the limits of the German tongue, and aimed at embracing a whole quarter of the globe, was scarcely calculated to bring undeveloped nations into independent significance. The tendency of their rule was to Germanise Italy, not to awaken her to the consciousness that she was a separate, coherent member of the great Empire.

The ties which had made Italy an organic part of the Empire were relaxed during the seventy years under the two last Franconian Emperors. The strength of the Ottos lay in their genuine efforts to prevent the secularisation of the Church, and to revive morals and culture, and these aims the Salians abandoned, thereby alienating the sympathies of the people on both sides of the Alps to such a degree that even the disgraceful spectacle of Canossa only increased the contempt for the Emperor, without firing any one to wipe out the insult offered him.

During the prolonged struggles between Pope and Emperor on the right of Investiture, the cities of Northern Italy, led by their bishops, or acting as republican commonwealths, had silently cast off the bonds which held them in their place in the Imperial feudal system. Flourishing

manufactures and successful trade had taken up their abode within the cities' walls. A pride of citizenship arose. Each city vied with its neighbours in raising cathedrals and municipal buildings, and a new and powerful element had entered into the political conditions of Italy.

Then the mighty Barbarossa, 'the blast of Suabia,' as Dante calls him, full of visions of the ancient power of the Empire, descended over the Alps into this transformed Italy.

Theoretically that Empire of the Ottos, of Karl the Great, and of Augustus himself, of which he dreamt, was still a reality. During the Middle Ages it had clothed its mighty limbs in the martial armour of the feudal system. But in point of fact the new life of Italy had broken through the old forms, and even before it had thrown off the husk of the former conditions, the fresh young life was pulsating beneath them.

And so it came to pass that, at the very time when the greatest jurists of the Peninsula, and even the delegates of the Lombard cities, were conceding to Frederick of Hohenstaufen on the plains of Roncaglia all his wildest fancies of Empire, the colossal struggle was beginning, in the course of which those very cities, after twenty years of fierce conflict, actually made good their superior rights. The destruction of Milan (1162) was answered, a few years later, by the formation of the Lombard League; and the defeat of Legnano compelled the high-handed Emperor, first to humble himself before Alexander III., and afterwards to concede the demands of the cities at the Peace of Constance.

This Lombard League, and its tough endurance through all the shifting fortunes of the fight, is regarded by the historians as a first bright outburst of the flame of Italian nationality. And in truth we still possess an oath by which the confederates bind themselves 'to oppose any

army from Germany or other land of the Empire beyond the Alps attempting to penetrate into Italy; and should such army nevertheless gain entrance, to persevere in war till the said army be again expelled from Italy.'

We must however remember that the 'Italy' in question still extends no further than the valley of the Po, north of the Apennines. Only distant echoes of the struggles of Northern Italy penetrated to Tuscany. And even in Lombardy the struggle was not between two nationalities, but between feudal centralisation and municipal independence. The struggle would have been as bitter if a native prince, the Marquis of Monferrat, for instance, or William the Good of Sicily, had set up similar pretensions in Lombardy. Other cities, such as Pavia, Lodi, and, for a long time, Cremona, or, on the other side of the Apennines, Genoa, Pisa, and Pistoja, were no less Italian than the cities of the Lombard League, and yet they stood as persistently for the rights of the Emperor as the others did against them. In fact, the movement is so far from deserving the name of 'national' that the express condition under which the cities in the League more than once offered to make terms with the Emperor was the humiliation of a neighbouring city with which they were at enmity; and during the thirteen years of Barbarossa's reign, after his reconciliation with the Pope, he kept on good terms with the Lombard cities, whereas the old hostility between Milan and Pavia, together with many similar feuds, continued with unabated violence.

Right up to the end of the twelfth century we may let the history of Italy pass before us without finding a trace amongst its inhabitants of any idea that the whole Peninsula is their common fatherland, for which they must be ready to stake life and goods. The only way in which a sense of unity could be given to a land embracing so many separate kingdoms and free cities, so torn by contending parties,

that could not even look back to a vanished political union of former times, was through a common language, civilisation, and poetry. And, strangely enough, it was the heroic scion of this very house of Hohenstaufen, the second Frederick, who opened this way to Italy.

Born in the March of Ancona, and reared in the beautiful island of Sicily, this prince was almost more of an Italian than a German in his bringing up. The poetry of Northern France and of Provence had been naturalised in Sicily at the court of the Norman dynasty from which his mother sprang, while his father, Henry VI., had brought German minnesingers in his train to the royal city of Palermo, where there must still have lingered some poetical traditions of Byzantine and Arabian days. The bud of Sicilian poesy, the parent of the Italian, unfolded itself under these manifold influences; here, as elsewhere, shaping the common language to the needs of verse long before any one ventured to use it for prose writings.

On this subject Dante himself declares:

'The Sicilian vernacular seems to assert its fame above all others by the fact that whatever Italians write in verse is called Sicilian; and further, that we find many masters, natives of that region, to have sung weightily. . . . And indeed the illustrious heroes, Frederick the Caesar, and his well-begotten Manfred, manifesting the nobility and integrity of their nature, so long as fortune remained with them, followed the pursuits of men and scorned those of brutes. So that all who were noble of heart and adorned with the graces, strove to keep close upon the track of the majesty of such great princes. Wherefore in their time, whatsoever the most excellent of the Latins accomplished, was first produced at the court of these so great monarchs. And because the regal seat was in Sicily, it came to pass that whatever our predecessors produced in the vernacular was called Sicilian,—a usage which we too retain, nor will posterity have power to alter it.'

Our speech is the bond which unites us to our native place, and even to our family, just as Dante says in praise

of the mothers of the good old days, when he is telling us of the simple ways of ancient Florence :[1]

'The one kept watch, minding the cradle, soothing her infant with that language of its own, wherein it first delights its father and its mother. Another, as she drew the hair from off the distaff, would tell her household of the Trojans, of Fiesole, and Rome.'

Love for our native tongue, then, is the expression of our love of our native land. Dante says elsewhere :[2]

'If flames of fire were issuing from the windows of a house, plain for all to see, and one should ask whether that house was on fire, and another should answer that it was, I could not say which of the two were most to be held in scorn. And it were no otherwise with the question put to me, and my reply, were one to ask me if I loved my mother-tongue, and should I answer yea.'

And when Dante, for the first time in history, wishes to speak of Italy as the common Fatherland, he draws his expression from the common language :[3] 'The beauteous land where *si* is uttered.'

He hangs, with glowing love, on this 'beauteous land,' called to be a queen and yet no better than a slave.[4]

'Oh Italy, thou slave, thou hostelry of woe, ship without helmsman in the mighty storm, no queen of provinces, but house of shame. . . . And now your living citizens are never free from war; and those whom one wall and moat begird gnaw one another. Search, wretched one, around thy shores, then turn to thine own bosom, and see if any part of thee enjoyeth peace.'

At one time he looks for a deliverer, who shall curb dissension and greed, and make Italy once more strong and united. He even dares prophetically to announce him :[5]

'He shall redeem low-lying Italy, for which there died the virgin Camilla, Euryalus and Nisus, and Turnus, of their wounds.'

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[1] *Par.* xv. 121. [2] *Convivio* i. 12. [3] *Inf.* xxxiii. 80.
[4] *Purg.* vi. 76. [5] *Inf.* i. 106.

But again he despairs of the issue. The salvation which was possible from Rudolf of Hapsburg's hands was no longer so a generation later. When he shows us the Hapsburger's shade it is with the words :[1]

'He who sits highest and shows semblance of having neglected what behoved him do, who moveth not his lips to others' song, was Rudolf, Emperor, in whose power it stood to heal the wounds which have slain Italy, so that another strives too late to raise her.'

The prospect of deliverance on which for so many years he fixed his eyes came from Henry VII. of Luxemburg. Dante assumes the year 1300 as the date of his journey through the other world, though in reality the *Divine Comedy* was not written till many years later. Now the year 1300 falls long before Henry's election as Emperor, and therefore it is under the form of a prophetic vision that Dante sees the place awaiting the Luxemburger in the loftiest region of Paradise.[2]

'In that great seat on which thine eyes e'en now are fixed, by reason of the crown already resting there, e'er at this bridal feast thyself shalt sup, the soul will sit—imperial on earth—of that high Henry, who shall come to straighten Italy, e'er she be ready for him.'

And so in hope, in sorrow, in reproof, we see Dante filled with the same glowing love for the Fatherland of Italy, a love which he is the first to put into words. He is the first, and we can hardly find another that transcends the warmth of his expression. Amongst the most beautiful flights of Italian poetry in this direction is a canzone of Petrarch's, from which I give a few lines as a sample :

'My Italy, albeit my speech be powerless to heal the mortal wounds I see so thick upon thy beauteous body, nathless it is some solace to utter forth such sighs as Tiber and Arno look for from me, and Po whereby I sit in dolorous and heavy mood.

[1] *Purg.* vii. 91. [2] *Par.* xxx. 133.

. . . Is not this the land which I first touched? Is it not the nest where sweetly I was nurtured? Is it not the fatherland in which I trust, my mother tender and benign, in which my one and other parent rests? Oh, for God's sake, let this at last touch you [the lords of Italy] at heart, and look with pity on the tears of this grieving folk!'

But we must never forget that the Union for which the great poets of the fourteenth century had begun to cry, uttering their love for their Italian Fatherland in words of burning eloquence, was rather an ideal unity of spirit than any outward and materially visible thing. Far indeed was it from the Uniformity which is to be brought about in the present day by overwhelming all the legitimate differences of the component parts. Dante surely had no thought of allowing the complex Italian organism, with its aristocratic republics like Venice, and democracies like Florence, its feudal principalities, such as Naples, and its rule of autocratic dynasts in so many Northern states, to be plunged into the all-reducing crucible of a Kingdom of Italy. He yearned indeed for the day when there should be an end to internecine feuds, and the states should bind themselves together as members of one body, and give each other mutual support; and in order that this Union might not fall to pieces at the first blow, the Emperor was to hold the supreme power as judge over the whole, and avenger of every breach of law.

We have said above that the geographical conception of Italy is somewhat vague; and it is scarcely needful to add that the *Italianissimi* stretch it to its furthest conceivable limits. It is worthy of note that in one point at least, they have the support of Dante's authority. In describing the tombs in which the shades of the heretics lie, he compares them with the Roman sepulchres, which in his time were still to be seen round the ancient naval station of Pola, on the southern point of Istria, while he

describes the city as neighbour to the Quarnaro, the wide bay at the northern end of which Fiume lies[1]—'Even as at Pola, hard by the Quarnaro, which shuts in Italy and bathes her boundaries.' Thereby including the whole of the extensive Istrian Peninsula in Italy.

Less decisive as to the poet's views is a second passage where, speaking of Lago di Garda, he says:[2] 'Up in fair Italy there lies a lake a-foot the Alp that bars out Germany above Tyrol, that bears the name Benaco.' So that in strictness we might say that the poet distinguishes between the Southern declivity of the Alps, which he counts as belonging to Italy, and the ridge itself, which forms the boundary (*che serra Lamagna*). But we can hardly suppose that Dante intended to press this very literal meaning of his words; and indeed we may suppose that very few of those who now speak of Italy as 'stretching from the Alps to the Straits of Messina' mean to imply any such idea.

The hatred of all foreign dominion, especially of the *Tedeschi*, and indeed a kind of racial hatred between the two nations, is also traced back by the modern patriots to Dante, or at any rate supported by an appeal to him.

As a matter of fact, there is no adequate ground for any such feeling in the history of the growth of Italy. The purity of manners, the fidelity, the manly vigour, which Tacitus attributed to the Germans, and held up to shame the Romans in their own depravity, remained for centuries a source of respect to the inhabitants of the Peninsula. It is this, not mere flattery of the ruler of the moment, which inspired Claudian's poem in praise of Stilicho referred to above, and attached Boethius and Cassiodorus to the

[1] *Inf.* ix. 113. [2] *Inf.* xx. 61.

Gothic Theodoric's court. The Longobards indeed awoke no such feelings of respect, for while they retained, for the most part, their native savagery, they fell a prey to the Roman corruption and effeminacy as well. But Pipin and Karl, with their Franks, were greatly honoured. Pipin shielded Stephen II. against Astolf's violence, and when Pope Hadrian was in fresh straits, Karl abolished the whole kingdom of the Longobard Desiderius; and Otto in like manner appeared as a deliverer in all kinds of ways. Queen Adelheid hailed her deliverer as husband, the Lombards invoked his aid against the violence of the second Berenger, Pope John XII. against the Roman potentates, and the Romans against their unworthy Pope. But all alike found in him their master. He thrust John from Peter's chair, and led his successor, Benedict V., who was opposed to the sway of the Emperor, into exile in Germany, together with the dethroned Berenger. He scourged the undisciplined Romans with rods of iron; and he established his German Counts and Barons throughout Italy. His son and namesake pursued the same course during his short rule, and that wondrous meteor, Otto III., was yet more decisive in his action, assigning the Papal See first to his cousin, a German by birth, and afterwards to his teacher, a German by education, and thereby put an end for a time to the terrible disorders of the Papacy.

Doubtless German and Italian were often opposed to each other during these fifty years, and it is likely enough that the fierce street-fights in Rome were embittered by race distinctions; but whatever modern Italian writers may say, there was no general anti-Teutonism, no hatred of *Teuton rule* as such. The Italians regarded the Saxon Emperors as the legitimate successors of the Karlovingian Franks, to whom both the Empire and the suzerainty of the Italian Peninsula belonged of right.

Nor was it only in strictness of morals and stubbornness of

valour that the Germans of this period were superior to the Italians. They surpassed them, and especially the Romans, in culture and in learning. In Rome the glorious memories of her own past were choked by the rank growth of fable and legend, and it was from the court of Otto III. that Sylvester II. at last brought back a more serious learning to the city of Augustus.

However often the restless Italians disregarded the rule of the Ottos, they fully recognised their rights in principle, and centuries later the haughtiest of the Lombard and Tuscan nobility took pride in tracing their descent from one or another of the barons who came into the land in the train of the Saxon Emperors. Nor does any one question that even to this very day many of the noblest family-names in Italy are of German origin.

Highly characteristic of the feelings of the time is the story which appears regularly in the works of all the earlier Tuscan chroniclers, and is mentioned by Dante himself. A certain Marquis Hugo (the tradition says of Brandenburg[1]) came to Italy with Otto III., and was appointed imperial Vicar of Tuscany. He was warned by a vision to sell all his goods in Germany, and to found seven goodly abbeys round about Florence with the proceeds. So great was the love he won in the land that on his death without an heir the six families that had received knighthood from him took of his armorial bearings upon their own shields in honour of his memory. Down to Dante's own time, three hundred years later, his fame was perpetuated by a celebration on St. Thomas's Day, the anniversary of his death. Such a trait as this points to anything but national hatred of the Germans.

The relations of the two races were certainly less friendly

[1] A patently unhistorical trait. Probably there is some confusion with the Marquis Hugo of Tuscany, a son of Humbert, who appears in connection with Otto II.—The epitaph in the Florentine Badia calls him *Comes Andeburgensis*.

in the days of Frederick Barbarossa, and the historians copy one after another the stock examples of the embitterment rising out of the struggles in Lombardy. We have already said enough, however, to enable the student to reduce the significance of these tales to its proper dimensions. But we may just refer to the following story, recurring again and again in the historians: In 1172 Archbishop Christian of Mainz was besieging Ancona, and had already reduced it to the utmost straits. The burghers were inclined to surrender, but a blind old centagenarian warned them against it. 'Indulge in no delusive hopes,' he said, 'for I know by long experience that an enduring union between Italian and German is impossible.' This sounds emphatic enough, but a suggestive side-light is thrown upon it by the little circumstance that Ancona was being held not for Italy, but for the Byzantine Emperor Manuel Comnenus.

Yet however many minds Barbarossa's harshness or the cruelty of his son may have estranged from the German imperial rule, we have seen above, from Dante's own words, how the second Frederick drew all that was noblest and most gifted in Italy round his throne. And the age in which the German Emperor, with his sons Enzius and Manfred, and his chancellor Petrus à Vineis, are amongst the first to enrich with their eloquence the new-born art of Italian poetry, was hardly one to raise up enmity between the two races united in the heroic person of the Emperor. After the days of Frederick II., hatred of the Germans, had it existed, must have died of inanition. But one German prince led an army across the Alps, during the next sixty years, and truly Conradino's tragic fate was rather calculated to appease than to kindle hatred.

Such was the temper of the times into which Dante came, and we have already seen how he himself looked to a Roman Empire wielded by a German dynasty as the

hope of peace and wellbeing for Italy. He himself hastened to the borders of the Lake of Geneva to meet Henry VII. on his march to Rome.

'Long,' he afterwards wrote, 'have we wept by the streams of Confusion, and without ceasing have implored the protection of our righteous king, that he should scatter the following of the cruel tyrant and re-establish us in our just rights. And when thou, successor of Caesar and Augustus, leaping over the ridges of the Apennines, didst bring back the venerated Tarpeian standards, forthwith our long sighing desisted and the floods of our tears were dried. And even as the rising of the longed-for Titan, the new hope of a better age flashed upon Latium.'

In the same spirit he writes to the princes, lords, and independent cities of the whole Peninsula:

'Oh Italy! once to be pitied by the very Saracens, rejoice even now; for thou shalt be envied throughout the world; because thy bridegroom, the solace of the world, and the glory of thy people, the most clement Henry, Divus, and Augustus and Caesar, is hastening to the bridal. Dry thy tears and take away the marks of grief, O thou fairest one; for nigh at hand is he who shall release thee from the prison of the impious.'

But Dante still measures the right of the Emperor by that ideal which floated before the eyes of the Ottos, as of Barbarossa before them, and found expression on the plains of Roncaglia. Turning to those who would presume to resist Henry, he says in the same letter:

'Ye who drink his streams and sail upon his seas; who tread upon the sands of the shores and the summits of the Alps which are his; who possess whatsoever public right ye enjoy, and all things ye hold in private, by the chain of his law, not else, deceive not yourselves in ignorance, nor dream in your hearts and say: "We have no Lord"; for all that heaven circles is his garden and his lake.'

These words of joy and confident hope stand in contrast to the expressions of sorrow and dejection at the lapse of imperial authority in Italy, before and after Henry's

time. We have already cited his indictment of the Emperor Rudolf. Elsewhere the poet likens Italy to a noble charger, that grows restive when he no longer feels his rider in the saddle. To Rudolf's son, King Albrecht of Austria, he cries, with a foreboding reference to his murder at Rheinfelden :[1]

'See how the beast has turned vicious through lack of correction from the spur, since ye[2] placed your hand upon the rein. O German Albert, who abandonest her, who hath grown wild and savage,—thou who shouldst have bestridden her saddle—may just judgment fall from the stars on thy race, and be it new and open that thy successor may have fear thereat. For thou and thy sire, kept away by greed, have suffered the garden of the Empire to become a desert.'

But if the fiery charger will no longer obey his appointed master, the fault does not lie in that master's negligence alone, but is due in equal measure to the usurpations of the Popes, who instead of being satisfied with the direction of the Church, and leaving to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, strove to wrest this authority likewise to themselves :[3]

'Rome, which framed the good world, was wont to have two suns, to make folk see the one path and the other, the world's and God's. One sun hath quenched the other, and the sword is grafted on the crozier. The one united with the other must perforce take an ill path, for now that they are joined one feareth not the other.'

And a little further on :[4]

'And now proclaim it that the Church of Rome, confounding in herself two regimens, falls in the mire, and befouls herself and what she bears.'

But while Dante is inexhaustible in his eulogies of the Romano-German Empire, he scarcely ever mentions our

[1] *Purg.* vi. 94.
[2] The Pope and his adherents.
[3] *Purg.* xvi. 106.
[4] *Ibid.*, line 127.

nation; and when he does, it is without partiality indeed, but also without hatred. Only in one place does he accuse us of a weakness which we would fain repudiate, but it has been laid to the charge of Germany, down even to our own day, on so many hands, that we cannot escape the fear that our forefathers at least gave grounds for the accusation. It is the passage in which he speaks of 'the guzzling Germans.'[1] But it is significant of the public opinion in those days, that one of the two earliest of the Italian Commentators understands this opprobrious epithet as the name of another nation, mentioned along with the Germans, while the other says that if Dante really meant to disparage the Germans, he for his part is not minded to follow him in slandering a high-minded and friendly people.[2]

Like sentiments were prevalent until within a few decades of the present time. It was only in the last century that the Lombards blessed Maria Teresa for healing, with wise hand, the wounds made by the heavy yoke of Spain, and Leopold, who as German Emperor set his face so steadily against revolution, was honoured in Tuscany as a popular reformer. Nay, in my own youth, I was present in Rome, during the visit of the Emperor Francis to Pope Pius VII., and the Romans hailed him with acclamations as *their* (the Roman) Emperor.

An unpleasing exception to the neighbourly feeling of the one people to the other is found in Petrarch, who in the celebrated Canzone from which I have already quoted a fragment, heaps reproaches upon the Germans, which have since been quoted only too often, and with too passionate an emphasis:

[1] *Inf.* xvii. 21.

[2] The context seems to imply that the *Ottimo* is the second Commentator referred to, but I have not been able to find the passage either in him or any other of the early Commentators. Buti gives the other interpretation mentioned in the text.—ED.

'Nature did well for our prosperity when she flung the bulwark of the Alps 'twixt us and German madness. But blind desire, stubborn against all blessing to itself, toiled till it won a tetter for its wholesome flesh. Now in a single cage do savage beasts and gentle cattle dwell. . . . O, gentle Latin blood, hurl thou those grievous burdens from thee! Make not an idol of an empty name that holds not aught. Sure, if the madness of this headstrong folk o'ercomes our intellect, 'tis due to our sin, 'tis not a thing of nature. . . . Ye princes of my country, in whom alone she hopeth, after God, were ye to show some sign of tenderness, virtue should seize her arms to vanquish madness, —and short should be the contest, for the ancient valour is not yet dead in hearts of Italy.'

But we must not attach too much weight to the words, only too eloquent, of this excessively vain and excitable poet. His unparalleled inconstancy is illustrated some decades later, on the occasion of Charles IV.'s advance on Rome. He urged the Emperor, in one high-flown letter after another, to undertake the expedition, and when it was at last entered upon, this same Petrarch writes to Andrea Dandolo, Doge of Venice:

'Suffer not that the flourishing republic that is intrusted to your care should allow the fair portion of Italy that lies between the Alps and the Apennines to become the prey of the ravening wolves, whom nature has parted from us by the bulwark of the Alps, which she herself has reared. It is we ourselves that throw open our doors to these wild beasts who batten on our blood.'

Then the king of these wild beasts actually came over the Alps, and despite the bitter winter weather, Petrarch very soon presented himself at his court in Mantua. In Milan he did not move from the Emperor's side, and some months later obeyed his summons to Prague.

As for the charge of bad faith urged in this same Canzone against Louis of Bavaria, who in truth had been shamefully deceived by the Italian Ghibellines, we can only say that such a gross slander is partially explained, though by no

means excused, by the plague-laden atmosphere of Avignon, in which at that very moment Petrarch was allowing himself to be held captive by the charms of the Provençal beauty.

Dante alludes in the same incidental fashion to another neighbouring people, viz., the French. By way of emphasising the levity of the Sienese he says that it exceeds that of the French themselves.[1] But as to the ruling dynasty of France, the house of Capet, one branch of which had established itself in the South of Italy a generation before, there is no end to the energy with which he wields the lash—or rather the bludgeon—against them! Even his fierce hatred of Boniface VIII. falls back when he thinks of the sacrilege done him by Philip the Fair at the hand of William of Nogaret:[2]

'I see the lilies in Anagni, and Christ made captive in his Vicar's person. I see him mocked again, I see the vinegar and gall renewed, I see him slain 'twixt robbers left alive.'

I must refrain from further quotations of the outbursts of the poet's scorn for this king, or his brother, Charles of Valois, the author of Dante's exile, or his uncle, Charles of Anjou, the usurper of Naples, with his son and grandson, for they would lead us too far from our path.

My object was merely to show that more than half a millennium ago Dante's clear insight already recognised the stranger that threatened Italy as lying not to the North-east but to the North-west of the Peninsula. And four hundred years after Dante's day Filicaja's often quoted sonnet pointed in like manner to France, and not to Germany:

'Italy, Italy, to whom Fortune gave the fatal gift of beauty, whence thou hast drawn the dismal dowry of unnumbered groans, and bear'st them written on thy brow in dire anguish,—

[1] *Inf.* xxix. 123. [2] *Pur.* xx. 86.

Oh that thou wert less beauteous, or more brave! And so wert held in greater fear or in less love by them who melt under thy beauty's rays, and then defy thee to the very death. Then should I no more see torrents of warriors pouring from the Alps, nor should the steeds of France drink of thy blood mingled with waves of Po; nor should I see thee, girt with swords not thine, smite with a foreign arm, ever a slave or conquering or conquered.'

It remains to examine our third point: Dante's attitude towards the temporal power of the Pope. Now although we shall see that Dante opposed the claim of the Popes, or rather the rights they had already made good, yet we may lay it down at once that it would be entirely erroneous to suppose the poet's attitude to be that of a Ghibelline party leader, or, as many have recently attempted to show, that of a heretic. In this, as in all other respects throughout his whole poem, Dante shows himself an orthodox Catholic. His belief in the divine claim of the Bishop of Rome to the government of the Church is so complete, that at the beginning of the poem he traces in the Roman Empire—nay, in the escape of Aeneas from the flames of Troy—the foundations on which Peter's chair should rest. He looks on the transference of the Papal See to Avignon under Clement v. as an apostasy from this divine order. And he considers the Papal authority the highest on earth, not merely equal to that of the Emperor but superior to it, in the degree wherein the spiritual is always worthy of more honour than the material. 'Let Caesar, therefore,' writes Dante in one of his earliest works,[1] 'observe that reverence to Peter which a first-born son ought to observe to a father, so that, illuminated by the light of paternal grace, he may with greater power irradiate the world.' And to this view he remained true; appealing even at the time of Henry vii.'s

[1] *De Monarchia*, iii. 16 : 134.

march on Rome, to the authority of the Pope,[1] who had blessed the imperial expedition.

But again and again, in the course of the centuries, the clergy had fallen a prey to avarice and all the lowest worldly passions. 'I am jealous unto death for thine house,' cried Dante, as pious devoted men had cried out times without number against such pollution of sacred things. Even if better Popes raised the Church out of the mire, she sank ever back again into the slough of worldliness. Such aberrations merit the reproaches which Dante, like Arnold of Brescia before him, or Savonarola after, poured upon them:[2]

'Cephas and the great vessel of the Holy Spirit went lean and went unshod, accepting food from any hostelry. Now must the modern shepherds be propped up on this side and on that, with one to lead them, so heavy are they, while another shoves behind. Their mantles spread over their very palfreys, so that two beasts step on beneath one hide. Oh, patience, that so long endurest!'

And what spiritual food, what comfort, can such degenerate clergy offer to their flocks?[3]

'They think not what the cost in blood of sowing it [the divine Scripture] on earth; nor how he pleaseth who humbly keepeth in its company. Each is intent on making a good show, and schemeth his inventions, the which forthwith the preachers ply, and quit the Gospel.'

And a little later (line 109):

'Christ said not to his first assembly: "Go and preach fooling to the world"; but gave the true foundation; and just so much sounded on his lips as made them take the Gospel for their shield and lance in battling to kindle faith. Now they go forth to preach equipped with jests and with grimaces; and if

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[1] At the close of his letter to the Princes of Italy.

[2] *Par.* xxi. 127. Let the Catholic reader remember that not only have many good Catholics written commentaries on the *Comedy*, but Popes themselves have accepted the dedication of editions of the poem.

[3] *Par.* xxix. 91.

but they wake a laugh, their cowls inflate and they demand no more. But such a bird is nested in the hood-tail, that if the people saw, they would apprize at its due worth the pardon that they trust in. But so much folly spreads throughout the earth, that, without proof of any authorising, they flock to every promise.'

This secularised clergy had a fitting head, who, through his dominant station, was plunged far deeper yet in traffic with the world. But it is in their possession of a territory of their own that Dante recognises the germ of this devastating ambition of the Popes.

The fabling Middle Ages traced the origin of the States of the Church to the Emperor Constantine. On his conversion by Sylvester he transferred his abode from Rome to the Eastern city which bore his name, in humble acknowledgment of the higher authority of the Pope, while he presented Rome and its territory to Peter's chair. Dante never for a moment questions the truth of this history, but in it he sees the origin of endless evil:[1]

'Ah, Constantine, mother of how much evil was—not thy conversion, but—the dowry received from thee by the first wealthy Father.'

In the *Paradiso* the Imperial Eagle, which is represented as itself speaking, points out Constantine's spirit to the poet with the words:[2]

'With good intent that bore ill fruit he who next followeth made himself, with the laws and me, a Greek, to give the shepherd room. Now knows he that the ill result of his good doing harmeth not himself, albeit the world is all laid waste thereby.'

In the great closing vision of the *Purgatorio* we have just been shown how the world fell to ruins through that gift. The poet sees the Church in the likeness of a wain, on which the Roman eagle descends, showering its feathers,

[1] *Inf.* xix. 115. [2] *Par.* xx. 55.

(the imperial offerings) upon it. Then a lament sounds from heaven, 'Alas my bark, how evil is thy cargo!' whereon the wain itself is transformed to the apocalyptic beast with seven heads and ten horns.

Greed and land-lust, once kindled by possession, no longer permit of the exercise of spiritual government in a spiritual sense. Excommunication, indulgence, and dispensation are alike made subservient to earthly purposes:[1]

'Time was when war was made with swords. But now 'tis by withholding, here or there, that bread which the pitying father bars to none. But thou who writest but to cancel, reflect that Peter, and that Paul, who died for the vineyard thou art laying waste, are yet alive.'

Elsewhere[2] the poet, instead of naming Rome, describes it as the place 'Where Christ is put to sale from day to day.' As Peter looked down from heaven to earth, how could he fail to burn with holy wrath![3]

'He who on earth usurps my place, my place, my place, vacant in the sight of the Son of God, hath made my burial-place a sink of blood and filth, whereat the rebel who fell hence rejoices there below.'

And six terzine further on:

'We did not mean that one part of the Christian folk should sit at the right hand of our successors, and one part on the left; nor that the keys granted to me should e'er become the ensign on a standard for war on the baptized; nor I the image on a seal to bought and lying privileges, whereat full many a time I blush and burn. In garb of shepherds ravening wolves are seen from here above, roaming the pastures. O God's defending justice, wherefore lie'st thou prostrate!'

Similar outbreaks of wrathful zeal against conditions which the poet regarded as a desecration of the Most Holy occur throughout the *Comedy*. But I would rather cast a backward glance over the outcome of the examination already made, than pile up further examples of the same kind.

[1] *Par.* xviii. 127. [2] *Par.* xvii. 51. [3] *Par.* xxvii. 22.

We have pointed to Dante as the first who taught the dwellers in the Peninsula to recognise the whole of Italy as their Fatherland, and who consecrated to his love of this Fatherland inspired words which still echo in every heart. But we must remember that the United Italy he proclaimed was not that which is being realised by the convulsions of the present day. We have further seen how the poet, far from being inimical to the German nation, or even to German influences in Italy, finds the only true salvation for his country in the articulated subordination of her states to the Romano-German Empire; while on the other hand he is consistently hostile to France and her rulers, and sees a grave source of danger in their influence on the affairs of the Peninsula. Finally, we have witnessed Dante's wrath over the worldly degeneration of the clergy and over the ambition and land-lust of the Papal See, and have seen how the Ghibelline poet traces the source of all this degeneration to the fact that the clergy, and the head of Catholic Christendom, have allowed themselves to be drawn by earthly possessions into the whirl of earthly interests and disputes.

Our object, as we began by saying, was to discover how far the appeal to Dante was justified in the mouths of those who have led or have taken part in the latest revolutions of Italy. But before closing, we may be permitted to repudiate any idea of passing a judgment on the tangled affairs of our own day, under the pretext of an answer to this question. Even if our reverence for the author of the *Divine Comedy* were so great as to brook no contradiction of his views, we could scarcely carry our idolatry so far as to accept opinions enunciated more than half a millennium ago, as deciding, in the last instance, the proper course to take under the conditions of the present day.

Dante's zeal against the temporal power of the Pope was based on weightier reasons than any of the modern apostles of Italian Unity can appeal to.

The Archimedean 'place whereon to stand' furnished by the diminutive States of the Church had sufficed the Pope for the foundation of a far mightier ideal construction to set over against that of the Roman Empire. It was an edifice which should embrace not only the spiritual but the temporal dominion of the world, in which the Bishop of Rome should sit on his exalted throne, wearing the triple crown and girt with the two swords, the symbols of temporal and of spiritual power, bestowing kingly and imperial crowns on his feudal vassals, as he had hitherto bestowed abbeys and bishoprics, all the world over. With the plans of this edifice Boniface VIII. answered the pretensions raised by the Hohenstaufens, but now already belonging to the past, and it became the life-work of Dante, the bard of the temporal monarchy, to lay bare the rottenness of its foundations.

The two sublime dreams of the Middle Ages faded away while Dante was yet living. The dishonour done to Boniface by William of Nogaret destroyed the one, and the other vanished ten years after on that day of St. Bartholomew which saw Henry VII. on his deathbed at Buonconvento.

The last shadow of the one ideal was wiped out in the first decade of the present century. The memory of the other still survives in the Allocutions and Encyclicals of the Vatican; but now, instead of the magnificent exercise of his feudal rights over the princes, the Pope's epistles are an anxious appeal to them for protection. This condition of things must be examined on its own merits,[1] and is quite remote from that on which Dante's invective was hurled.

Even the papal entreaties are now silent, except for

[1] Compare, for example, Döllinger's Academic *Ostervorlesung* for 1861.

impotent protests, unheeded by the European chancelleries. All that remains of Constantine's—or, to speak more correctly, of Pipin's—donation, is the Vatican. The sword is no longer grafted on the crozier (see above, p. 394), and the evils the union necessarily entailed on the latter as well as the former are no more. Nor can it be doubted that the Catholic Church is more powerful and more honoured, from a purely ecclesiastical point of view, than she was before September 20th, 1870; for in the hearts of the liberals the religious reverence for the head of their Church has no longer to encounter the hatred of the reactionary ruler.

Well! Italy is one from Stilvio to Cape Spartivento, nay to Cape Passero. We may not always have approved the means by which she was welded together, and may see centrifugal forces working, at any rate in secret, against a centralisation that has been pushed too roughly. But let us hope that time will cover earlier breaches of justice, will establish an inner bond of union between elements as yet strange to one another, and will find safe and prosperous paths for her still wavering and uncertain policy. Let us say then, as, if we mistake not, Dante himself would have said: It is not the Italy of which I dreamed, but one way or another Italy has become a whole, and may God send her unity and prosperity!—And we Germans?—Since the days of Napoleon, especially, almost our only stake in 'the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation' in Italy, has been proprietorship in a term of abuse. It came to such a pass, that whatever one's love for the common Fatherland, it was almost impossible for one to call himself 'Tedesco' in Italy. 'Alemanno,' or 'Prussiano,' had to be substituted. For 'Tedesco' stood exclusively for Austrian. And the Italians knew the Austrian, not as the brilliant and fascinating gentleman of the Viennese Hofburg, or as the kindly and pleasant *flâneur*, but only in the costume of a corporal, a custom-house officer, a tax-gatherer, or a police magistrate;

and unfortunately it is undeniable that though the Austrians are perhaps the pleasantest of the German-speaking peoples, they developed, at any rate in Italy, a less enviable talent for alienating the popular sympathy in each and all of the capacities above named. And the bitter feeling against Austria was still further heightened by her compressive influence on all the several states of Italy. But antipathy was by no means confined within the limits for which some justification existed. I once expressed to Alessandro Manzoni my surprise at the very unfavourable contrast between the Austrians in Italy, civil and military alike, and their fellow-countrymen on the banks of the Danube. He replied, 'Believe me, it is not that which is the cause of our antipathy. At any period since Napoleon used the word "Italy" as a political reality (though it was in truth no more than a phrase), if God Almighty had despatched an archangel to Lombardy as Governor, and a legion of angels as his officials, their rule would have been detested as a piece of foreign domination.'

But this state of things ended twelve years ago, and with it died the cry of hatred, 'Away with the foreigners!' The mutual liking of the two peoples, which is really no more than natural, is growing more and more hearty; and the mutual advantage of political fellowship is recognised by an ever-widening circle. There is unlimited confidence in the lasting power of United Germany, and a really romantic reverence for our grey-headed Emperor hero whom they love to call *Barbabianca*; and wherever the knightly figure of this heir to Germany's Empire has been seen on the other side of the Alps, he has won all hearts. Bismarck and Moltke are spoken of with admiration; the names of a host of German scholars meet with the warmest recognition; and in many a field of research, Germans and Italians reach out to one another the hand of friendship and mutual assistance across the Alps.

The poet's dream of a United Italy is realised, though the form of the vision is changed; and although the routes which have led to this goal are not those he looked to, they are yet related to them. Henry VII. did not, indeed, break down the walls of Brescia and Florence and bring the recalcitrant Guelfs to acknowledge the authority of the Empire, but Kaiser Wilhelm, the heir of the Luxemburger's crown and the representative of his blood, has won Venice for Victor Emanuel at Sadowa, and opened the doors of the Quirinal for him at Sedan.

POSTSCRIPT

[*Dante-Forschungen*, vol. ii. pp. 581-595 (1878).]

I deeply regret that, in reprinting my lecture on 'Dante and United Italy,' I failed to take account of a circumstance which certainly deserved some notice, if only a brief one. Four years after the delivery of my lecture, Professor Hermann Grimm published his *Neue Essays über Kunst und Literatur*, the fifth of which was entitled *Dante und die letzten Kämpfe in Italien* (pp. 119-163), and was in substance directed against my lecture. Immediately on its appearance I bought the book, and my copy leaves no doubt that I read the few sheets in question at once. How it came to pass that the attack of the talented essayist absolutely passed out of my memory remains a riddle to me. It was the year of the Dante Centenary, and a great mass of occasional writings poured in upon me. An autumn journey to Northern Italy largely increased the stock, and it may be that the thought of going fully into all this material obliterated the memory of what I had just read.

In one of the last of his long and instructive series of articles, entitled *Dante in Germania*, published in the

Rivista internazionale, Scartazzini dealt with the subject of these *Essays* (No. 26, March 15th, 1877). On receiving the number containing this article, which happened to conclude a volume of the periodical, I sent it at once to the binder, and so for the time this discussion of the subject also escaped my attention. It was not until my own lecture had long been reprinted for the present volume, that I chanced, as I turned over the pages of the *Rivista*, to come upon Herr Grimm's name in connection with my own.

I need hardly say that I looked up the new *Essays* at once, and carefully read through the article in question. But, however open I might strive to keep my mind, it was impossible that Scartazzini's judgment should be without influence upon me; and I will therefore quote it at once.

Scartazzini is essentially at one with Grimm in his political point of view, and after rehearsing the arguments urged by the latter against me, he expresses his own adhesion to the more favourable view of the events that have transformed Italy in our day.[1] But he goes on to say:

'With respect to Dante, however, he is simply a dilettante, and a very superficial one. The man who knows so little of Dante as to declare openly that the whole of his great poem is merely a condemnation of his political enemies, and a panegyric of his friends (p. 128), who dares to put in print that Dante, blinded with faction fury, could not believe in any good in his adversaries, and shut his eyes to every injustice and wrong done by his friends, or contrived to put a favourable complexion upon it (p. 152), simply exposes himself by attempting to discuss Dante's opinions. . . . After an interval of two years Grimm has reprinted his *Essay*, sentence for sentence and word for word.—Well! he may reprint it as often as he likes. No one can stop him.'

Such is the judgment of an eminent student of Dante as to the measure of comprehension of Dante's political views which we must allow my opponent; and though

[1] 'I gladly allow that in his controversy with Witte he [Grimm] is essentially right.'

I should have expressed myself with more reserve, I must admit that it would hardly be possible to misrepresent Dante's attitude towards party politics more absolutely than Grimm has done in the utterances quoted by Scartazzini, and in many similar ones.

But my lecture had nothing to do with legitimatism or liberalism on my part. It was simply devoted to a study of the attitude of the *Divine Comedy* to the party struggles of its own time, and to the question how far we can justify the frequent practice of applying his utterances in this connection to the circumstances of to-day.

After a long abstract of Dante's *Monarchia* (pp. 128-142), which might almost as well have been omitted for any bearing it has on the subject under discussion, the essayist thus sums up the position (supposed to be mine) which he assails:

'In course of his lecture he formulates his general grievance against the Italian Liberals in three sentences. They have no right to appeal to Dante in support of (1) their glowing love for Italy as their common Fatherland; (2) their dislike of foreigners, especially Germans; (3) their hatred of the secular power of the Pope.'

Now, to begin with the first point, I can hardly understand how my opponent can, even by the most heroic misunderstanding, have extracted from my lecture any reproach against Italians—whether liberal or servile, for that matter—for believing in a fact, the existence of which was demonstrated at full length, and with applauding assent in that very lecture itself. About a third of the little work in question was summed up, after due historical support had been collected, in the words (p. 22; p. 387 above):

'And so in hope, in sorrow, in reproof, we see Dante filled with the same glowing love for the Fatherland of Italy, a love which he is the first to put into words. He is the first, and we can hardly find another that transcends the warmth of his expression.'

And then again almost on the concluding page (p. 43; p. 402 above):

'We have pointed to Dante as the first who taught the dwellers in the Peninsula to recognise the whole of Italy as their Fatherland, and who consecrated to his love of this Fatherland inspired words which still echo in every heart.'

Nothing is left then to explain Hermann Grimm's charges except the supposition of a singular confusion of ideas. It is one thing to declare that the Italians have a right to appeal to Dante in 'their love for Italy as a common Fatherland'; and this right I never contested, but eagerly enforced. It is another and a very different thing to attempt to show that the method by which United Italy was brought into existence, and the form which has been given to it, can be defended by Dante's authority. And it was this attempt alone which I declared to be wholly unjustified. I declared, and I still declare it.

The poet was no friend of annexation. Even the extension of the territory of his Fatherland was not to his mind, as the 15th and 16th cantos of the *Paradiso* show; and least of all, if annexation were the result not of open and honourable war, but of secret intrigue (*Purg.* xx. 64, 73); and if when he undertakes to exalt Cangrande, he says in praise of his hero that he fed 'not upon land nor pelf,' the contrast with the fact, which we are forced to admit, was perhaps intended as an admonition to call him back from a wrong path.

Such an Italy as Macchiavelli conceived in the *Principe*, under the centralising autocracy of some dynast, whether Cangrande, or Uguccione della Faggiuola, or Charles of Anjou, or any other, was as remote as possible from Dante's desire. Even my opponent is forced to grant so much. On page 149 he says:

'The Union, as it stands to-day, would have been inconceivable in Dante's times. Genoa, Venice, Pisa, Florence, Rome,

Naples, absolutely separate states from top to bottom, united in a single kingdom, with a central government, would have seemed little less impossible in those days than the whole earth as a single kingdom, with a central government at London, Paris, or New York would appear to us.'

Well, but if such a thought was absolutely inconceivable in Dante's times, and therefore in Dante's mind, what can be the justification of reproaching me with having declared it a mistake to appeal to Dante's authority in support of the very idea in question?

The unity of Italy that Dante proclaimed rested on unity of speech, unity of literature (so far as such a literature existed at all), and unity of manners. The only sense in which a political unity could be thought of was that ever since the Ottos there had been a *Regnum Italicum* (just as there had been a *Burgundy* and an *Arles*) recognised as a member of the Romano-German Empire. It is in this sense that the lecture speaks of an articulated subordination of Italy to the *Romano-German* (not, as quoted on pp. 122, 145, and 148, a *German*) Empire.—This phrase seems to have struck the essayist as a very strange one, yet it is fully supported by the conceptions of Mediæval law and polity, especially Dante's; and constantly occurs in the linguistic usage of the publicists.

In his book on the *Monarchy*, which Grimm himself quotes, the author, in expounding the nature of the Empire, starts with the individual man in relation to the members of his body and the powers of his mind; and goes on to the family and those that compose it, and then to the country district, the city and the principality; and shows that in all of them there is an organism articulated into unity. Now the Empire, the supreme commonwealth, embracing all the subordinate members, is not an oriental autocracy that swallows all right into itself; it allows commonwealths of every kind, republics, territorial

dominions, principalities, and kingdoms to continue intact beneath its suzerainty, so long as they keep the peace. Only when a conflict threatens a breach of peace does the Empire interfere, and then irresistibly and decisively. Such was the Empire of the Ottos. So was it shaped on the plains of Roncaglia (in theory, though no longer in fact) by the Hohenstaufens; and so did Dante's dreams still shape the Empire of the Luxemburger. For him there was no kind of conflict between the power of the Empire and the freedom of the Republican cities, or the rights of the Italian dukes, marquises, earls, and kings. For the Emperor was the defence of all of them against unlawful attacks of every kind, so long as they did but acknowledge their articulated subordination to the Empire. It is exactly in this sense that the poet calls upon the rulers and communities of the Peninsula to greet their peace-bringer and victorious defender, when Henry is advancing upon Rome.

The essayist admits (p. 156) that the Italian hatred of the *Tedeschi* is a product of recent times; yet he will not have it that the Italians are without justification in dating back this racial hatred (which, thank God, is now rapidly disappearing) to Dante. But if that hatred simply did not exist in the year 1300, how can the Epigoni have inherited it from the father of Italian poetry? My opponent in any case does his best to find traces of this dislike of the Germans in the *Divine Comedy*. In addition to the passage which I quoted in my lecture, reproaching the Germans with 'guzzling,' he 'conjectures' (p. 146) that when the poet calls Albrecht of Austria 'German,' he may mean to say: 'And true German art thou, a weak-willed dawdler, to wit, leaving Italy in the lurch and not coming to support us Ghibellines.'

I will leave this 'conjecture' for what it is worth, and will turn to another charge. I am made to say that Dante desired the subordination of Italy to German rule, and I

am made to base the assertion on the argument that he desired a German Emperor to rule the world, and consequently to rule Italy. I am made guilty of a further offence, in calling the Emperor German or Romano-German. 'We cannot,' says Grimm, 'allow a scholar to build an historic proof on a loose expression which happens to be current in Germany; and that without so much as mentioning the different use of the words (?); and especially when he has undertaken to defend a charge of conscious illusion.'

I have read through the forty-four small octavo pages of my lecture once again, and cannot discover that I have called any one a German Emperor except Leopold II., and this I hope my opponent will allow to pass. In another passage I say that Frederic Barbarossa's severity and Henry VI.'s cruelty may have alienated many minds from the German Imperial rule. Now these characteristics of the two Hohenstaufens could hardly have been alleged as grounds for the Italians, including Dante, desiring 'the subordination of their Fatherland under a German rule.' Finally, four times in my historical survey (pp. 7, 32, 43, and 45; above, pp. 377, 394, 402) I have used the phrase which may be regarded as established, the 'Romano-German Empire' (not Germano-Roman).—Of any attempt to build an historical proof upon a loose way of speaking (which it happens I never used), I have been unable to discover a trace in my essay, nor can I find any passage in which I have said, 'Because Dante wished for a German Emperor to rule the world, and therefore Italy, he desired the subordination of Italy under German rule.'

All this is simply outside the subject of the lecture. I denied that the Italians of our day have any right to appeal to Dante's authority in support of their hatred of Germany; and I supported my assertion by showing that since the times of the Saxon Emperors the Germans have stood in high repute with the dwellers in the Peninsula,

—a repute which has left its traces in Dante's writings too. And I may here add the witness of a younger contemporary of the poet, a Guelf too, the historian Giovanni Villani, who says in the first and third chapters of the fourth book of his Chronicle:

'And when the Pope [Leo VIII.] and all the clergy saw that the Church might not defend herself, nor have her liberties (because of the wickedness of the evil Romans and of the tyrants of Italy, in whose power she lay) save with the aid and might of the Germans, knowing the goodness and worth and power of the said King Otto, he was elected Emperor by the people of Rome and by the Church as the most worthy. . . . When Otto III. was dead, inasmuch as the Empire had gone by descent through three Ottos, from father to son, it seemed to Pope Sergius IV. (?) and to the cardinals and to the princes of Rome, that the election to the Empire should lie with the Germans, inasmuch as they were mighty folk, and were the strong arm of Christendom.'

Still more naïvely does the *Libro Fiesolano*, edited by Hartwig, express itself with respect to the Germans, and especially the Saxons. Catelline's son Uberto, the legend tells us, was chosen with seven of his sons, by the command of Augustus Caesar, to crush the revolt of the Saxons. He married the daughter of the Antigrado (?) of Germany, and was the ancestor of the race of the good King Ceto (Otto?) of Saxony. It is true that many assert that the Florentine Ubertis were descended from the German Emperor; but the truth is that the Emperor was descended from them. The son of the first Ceto (of Saxony) was the second Emperor Ceto, and his son the third Emperor of that name. Many descendants of the Uberti dwelt in Germany, but finally they removed their chief seat to Florence.

In proof of Dante's own recognition of German learning and German piety, we may appeal to the lofty places in Paradise which he gives to Rabanus Maurus, Hugo of St. Victor, and Albert of Cologne.

I have already said that the method by which Italy was united under Victor Emanuel's sceptre, and still more the way in which that union was led up to, were not such as we should suppose Dante would have approved had he been living. Hermann Grimm admits (p. 144) that on certain widely human concerns (and surely the moral law is one of them) our opinions are constant; and some pages later he adds (p. 160): 'We feel how the general laws of morality which find their clearest expression in the judgment of the Germanic peoples, apply to political problems as well as others. No power can stand against them. They pass ruthless sentence on princes and on peoples.' And yet he contradicts my assertion mentioned above.

Now to rake up old memories of the Piedmontese doings in the fifth and two following decades of the present century, would be all the less pardonable, inasmuch as subsequent treaties and other events have long ago secured complete popular indemnities for all that then took place. And my opponent, on his side, does not deny the facts themselves; he only maintains that they were justified by the misrule of the separate Italian States of the day.

I have never denied that in most of these States the condition of things before 1859 was miserable in the extreme. More than twenty years ago I gave public expression to my opinion on the utterly rotten government of the States of the Church, on the headstrong autocracy of Francis II. of Naples, the antediluvian despotism of Modena, the lusts of Charles III. of Parma, that desecrated the domestic sanctuary, and the irreconcilable conflict between rulers and ruled in Lombardo-Venetia. But it is another question whether real misrule, or what a neighbouring State regards as such, gives the latter a right to intervene, or even to annex, the ill-governed land. At the beginning of the twenties the Emperor Francis honestly believed that

the constitutionalism of Naples and Piedmont was misgovernment, Louis XVIII. thought the same of Spain, and they intervened. There was no question of annexation, but yet I doubt whether their intervention would have found favour in the eyes of Hermann Grimm.

With special reference to the temporal power of the Pope, I find my utterances strangely misunderstood in the *Essay*. In Dante's time, I said, the maintenance or destruction of the *dominium temporale* was a question that moved the world; and we can perfectly understand the zeal with which the poet fought against any temporal power on the part of the Roman bishop. But since this power has had to depend upon Austrian or French bayonets in order to maintain itself even in the possession of its own shrunken territories, the question has become, at any rate by comparison, an extremely subordinate one. It no longer justifies such passion as it might well excite in the *Divine Comedy*. And the lecture closes with the words: 'This condition of things must be examined on its own merits, and is quite remote from that on which Dante's invective was hurled' (p. 403 above).

But, it is urged, the revolution turned out for the advantage of the inhabitants of Italy, and, in my opponent's words, was brought about by the 'co-authorship of every individual in the bosom of the peoples, with its amazingly sudden awakening.' Now quite apart from the question of whether this fact, and the circumstance that the movement 'everywhere found rapid ways of practically accomplishing the stupendous transition,' themselves constitute a right, it remains to be asked whether the result realised really corresponded to the expectations that had been entertained. The hope that this may be so in the future I have already uttered (p. 404). But Hermann Grimm's views in this, as in other respects, are of a more optimistic character than mine. He imagines that the errors of com-

munism, the idea of getting rid of kings and princes, the violent republicanising of the land, and other products of political theorising, were simply provoked by the resistance of the old governments, and that 'now the growing enlightenment on every side has reduced these aspirations to their natural dimensions, and has replaced secret discontent by an open love for the Fatherland and a confidence in the future, in the light of which the present reveals itself as an epoch as fruitful and exalting as can well be conceived,'—Utopias, the illusory character of which the events of this very year [1878] have most painfully illustrated.

Criticism of the conditions recently established in United Italy seems to be equivalent in the eyes of Hermann Grimm to a desire for the simple restoration of the former state of things, somewhat after the fashion of what took place in Hesse when Kurfürst Wilhelm returned to Cassel from his exile in Prague. Polemics against such narrow reactionaries are simple enough. Possibly the deposed princes and their immediate surroundings may have entertained such hopes for many a year; but as for me, I had no share in them even in 1861, to say nothing of uttering them, or even hinting at them, in my lecture.

What I missed, and still miss, in the present Kingdom of Italy, is a reverent respect for the special character of the inhabitants of the different parts of the country, based on descent and tradition, and the protection and preservation of the organs and institutions which have been incorporated for generations in the different cities and districts. My criticisms, in a word, are directed to the revolutionary levelling so much beloved in our days. As for the expression which the essayist repeatedly refers to with inverted commas, presumably intended to express his indignation, the expression, namely, that it was certainly not Dante's intention that the republics and principalities of

his time should be swallowed up 'in the all-assimilating abyss of a kingdom of Italy,' I would note that it was used hypothetically of such a kingdom of Italy as might have arisen in Dante's time, and not of the one which has actually arisen in ours. Nevertheless it appeared to me too harsh, and in reprinting my essay (p. 388 above) I substituted for it a milder, though perhaps less characteristic one.

But have the experiences of half a generation shown my fears to be unfounded?

Since 1815 Prussia too has repeatedly extended her territory; but the Rhine Provinces have retained their French law, Swedish Pomerania its common law, and the annexed territories have been allowed to retain their internal institutions in all essentials. Hardly less consideration was shown in the conquests of the years 1864 and 1866, and still greater tenderness was exhibited towards the legal and other special institutions of the allied territories united with the kingdom.

It was otherwise in Italy. The excellence of all that had been done in legislation and government in more than one region of the Peninsula, even in the last century, went for nothing; and from 1859 onwards a rising flood of new laws swept, with the Piedmontese code and the Piedmontese organisation, over the whole Peninsula, tearing down all ancient institutions, however well preserved. And in the train of the new institutions came the Piedmontese officials commissioned to work them; to wit, the *Buzzurri*, whose very dialect was enough to rouse the antipathy of many of the inhabitants of Middle Italy. And yet the contrasts in the character of the peoples across the Alps are at least as great as those between the different German stocks. How is it possible that laws suitable for the Tuscans, educated and honest through every stratum, should suffice to restrain the Sicilian Mafia, who are organised for murder and putting

to ransom? Or can the Neapolitan untruthfulness and dishonesty, further heightened by the Camorra, be dealt with by the same measures which suffice to maintain order amongst the thoroughly trustworthy Lombards? What marked differences exist between even neighbouring peoples, —for instance, the courteous and accommodating Venetians and the people of Romagnola, who are always ready for violence, and generally for deceit!

To tear down a building centuries old, and without any consideration of its structure immediately to rear on the same site another building after an improvised plan, is expensive—very expensive. Italy has found it out. Myriads upon myriads have been spent upon the undertaking. The property of the spiritual institutions is almost consumed; taxes are driven to the verge of the endurable; and still we see the enforced currency of paper money; still we have to wait for the balance between income and expenditure. The completion of the network of railways has been often enough promised, but never performed. And as in general, so in detail; what were once the most flourishing cities of the Peninsula shrink in population one after another, while countless citizens are plunged into poverty and misery. The populace, specially in the country districts, is so crushed by the national taxes as to furnish only too good a justification of their protests.

But even among those who have no such cause of complaint, the number of malcontents with the present organisation of the State increases. Loud and ever louder rise the demands of some for the substitution of a Republic embracing the whole Peninsula for the present Monarchy, while others would plunge the country into a war of which no one can see the end, to conquer a district of a few square miles.

The condition of things, therefore, which Hermann Grimm thought was near at hand in 1865, and which in

the prefatory note, and at the close of my reprinted lecture, I too have sketched as the object of my hopes, is surely not yet realised. But in spite of all we will cling fast to the hope.—Quite recently an esteemed friend who, like myself, has long cherished a warm love of Italy, wrote to me from Rome:

'As Italy now stands there are dangerous pitfalls here and there, but lightly covered over. Yet take it for all in all, the foundation is sound. It is probable that the good leaven of Northern Italy, and especially Piedmont, may be gradually somewhat Neapolitanised; but no one can deny that the nation, especially the middle and upper classes, have set their hands to the work and will not lightly look back, and the opportunity and the inclination for learning are likewise gradually spreading.'

APPENDIX

TO ESSAY I.

THE beautiful summary of Dr. Witte's view of the mutual relations of Dante's three great works, which appears in this essay, presents his conception in its most general form, and the one least open to criticism. That Dante's life is divided into three periods, one of youthful innocence, one of backsliding, and one of final triumph, seems to admit of no doubt. The only questions are, whether the leading characteristic of the period during which he fell from grace was an overweening confidence in human philosophy, or simply some form of moral unfaithfulness; and (closely connected with this) whether the *Amoroso Convivio* is the record of the period of alienation, or of the first stage of the recovery. We shall find a more suitable opportunity for discussing these questions in connection with the third essay, in which Dr. Witte elaborates his hypothesis in further detail.

Dante's relation to the political and ecclesiastical parties and ideals of his time may be more closely studied in Professor Villari's *I Primi Due Secoli della Storia di Firenze* (2 vols. 8 lire; English translation by Mme Villari, in 2 vols., Fisher Unwin, 32s.). I have endeavoured to give a popular summary of Professor Villari's conclusions in my Introduction to the selections from Villani's *Chronicles of Florence*, translated by Miss Selfe (Constable, 6s.).

TO ESSAY II.

THIS essay contains much that is only of passing or secondary interest, and many of the reproaches justly urged against the Dante scholarship of the day have happily now ceased to be deserved.

Nevertheless it was impossible, for many reasons, to omit the essay from this selection. It is the one referred to in the Introduction (page ix), and has therefore a strong personal interest. The evident and justifiable partiality with which the author himself regards it (page 61) is a further reason for its inclusion. Moreover, it will give the reader a vivid impression of the specific work which Witte set himself to do, and did, viz. to vindicate what we may call the organic treatment of Dante's work as a whole. The scrappy and detached treatment of special points or special passages, without reference to Dante's whole system of thought, upon which the author pours his scorn, is unhappily not altogether a thing of the past; but Witte has made it impossible for any serious and competent student of Dante to be content with anything short of a complete survey of his life and

work, or to accept as final the interpretation of any detached passage which does not relate it to the whole scheme.

We no longer study Dante as a collection of 'beauties' or a storehouse of 'curiosities,' but treat him as a thinker and a poet, belonging to every age, because so absolutely identified with the deepest life of his own.

The reader should be warned, however, against the supposition that, in detail, this essay represents the mature judgment of the author.[1] Dr. Witte has made no attempt to correct or qualify it in every point, and we may therefore follow his example and be satisfied with this general caution.

On one or two points, however, the reader may be glad of hints towards the better understanding of the relations between various scholars, which are assumed in the essay, but never set forth. Lombardi's edition, in three vols., bears the date of 1791. In 1794 Dionisi issued a quarto pamphlet on 'Funeral Panegyrics,' which contained a number of criticisms on Lombardi's text and notes. To these Lombardi immediately answered in a tone to which Witte takes justifiable exception. This answer was regarded by Lombardi as a supplement to his edition, and is bound in at the beginning of the first volume in the British Museum copy, and doubtless in other copies subsequent to 1794. In 1817 De Romanis republished Lombardi's edition in four volumes, with additions, and introduced modifications into the text, which Witte regards as crude. Then in 1818-19 came Biagioli's first edition, which treated De Romanis with the same discourtesy which Witte complains of as Biagioli's general characteristic. He declares, for instance, that De Romanis had been so proud of one of his discoveries that he raised a shout that could be heard from Rome to Paris. In his second edition, 1820-22, De Romanis took note of Biagioli's work with the kindly dignity and equanimity which earns Witte's praise. Without the knowledge of these circumstances the passages on pages 35, 38, and elsewhere, are hardly intelligible.

The curious reader may further be interested to know that *L'Inferigno* (or as he preferred to write it, *Lo'Nferigno*), referred to on page 21, is the name borne as a member of the Academy *della Crusca* by Bastiano de' Rossi, who was secretary of the Academy in 1595, when the first Cruscan edition of the text of the *Comedy* appeared. He was virtually the editor. The edition was avowedly undertaken in order to furnish a basis for the citations of the *Vocabolario* issued in 1612, and the interest in it was therefore purely philological, as implied in the text. But it is difficult not to suspect that Witte meant to write *L'Infarinato*, not *L'Inferigno*. The former is the *Crusca* name of Salviati, who was the chief editor of the *Vocabolario* itself, and to whom therefore Witte's words apply still better than to his colleague. Margolotti, whose work on the first four

[1] Compare for instance the statements on p. 33 as to the relation between Nidobeato's text and that of Lombardi and De Romanis, with pp. xxvi *sq.* of the *Prolegomeni Critici* of the edition of the *Divina Commedia*, 1862.

cantos of the *Inferno* is referred to on page 25, was a scholar of the seventeenth century, though his notes were not published till 1819. He informs us that the idea which he elaborates was started by *Lo Smarrito*, which is the Cruscan name of Carlo Dati, another seventeenth-century scholar, who wrote a *Difesa di Dante*, etc. (see de Batines, *Bibliog. Dantesc.*, i. 415 *sq.*), and left MS. notes on the *Comedy* (see the Introduction to Margolotti, page 49). Curiously enough Margolotti's MS. was itself attributed by one of its possessors to this very Dati.

P. 23 *note*. The editions referred to are the Venice editions of 1757, 4 vols. in 5, 4to; and of 1760, 5 vols. 8vo; both of them published by Zatta.

P. 26. Rosa-Morando wrote diverse essays and annotations on the *Comedy* (see Index to Colomb de Batines), some of which are included in the Zatta editions cited above; but I have not succeeded in tracing the passage here referred to. Perazzini's supposed monograph (*in einer eignen Schrift* are Witte's words) does not exist. An elaborate note on *Purg.* ix. 1, the substance of which is correctly given by Witte, is to be found amongst his notes on Dante incorporated in a work on the sermons of Saint Zeno. It is very amusing, and is worth looking up. This and his other notes, together with the true account of his publication of 1775, and a warning against the error concerning it into which Witte has fallen, will all be found in Filippo Scolari's '*Intorno alle Epistole Latine di Dante Alighieri*. Venezia, 1844.'

P. 27. The Colombine Library was founded in 1539 by the second son of Christopher Columbus, and is now a part of the Cathedral Library (*Minerva*). The Laurentian and Riccardian Libraries at Florence and the Ambrosian Library at Milan are universally known. The Barberini Library (p. 30) was founded about 1638. It is in the Palazzo Barberini (*Minerva*).

P. 32. A 'hard apostrophe' is a form such as *lo'ntento*.

P. 33. Poggiali's MS. (now in the Palatine Library in Florence) is No. 163 in de Batines. The Stewart, Caetani, and Antaldi MSS. (504, 375, and 400 respectively in de Batines) are called after their possessors. The Cassinese (de Batines 409) from the Convent of Monte Cassino; the Angelica (de Batines 357) is in the Bibliotheca Angelica in Rome, founded in 1614 by Angelo Rocca di Camerino, an Augustinian monk; and the Chigi MS. (de Batines 382) is in the Bibliotheca Chigiana, founded by Fabio Chigi (Pope Alexander VII.) in 1660, in Rome (*Minerva*). The Vatican MS. used by De Romanis is a very celebrated one, formerly supposed to have been written by Boccaccio. It is 319 in de Batines.

P. 46 *note* 2. Repetti's work (1820) here cited is contained in Inghirami's *Opuscoli*, vol. i. pp. 373 *sq.* Probably Witte quotes from an extra copy struck with its own pagination.

P. 52 *note* 1. The *Memorie di religioni*, etc., was a Modena periodical, in which Parenti's remarks appeared. Ferd. Wolf's note is on p. 43 of the *Anzeige-Blatt*, at the end of Part II. of the Vienna *Jahrbücher der Litteratur* for 1824.

P. 57. Bosone da Gubbio's curious *Canto*, in which the extraordinary opinion here mentioned is expressed, will be found on pp. 109 *sq.* of the fourth vol. of the Roman edition (De Romanis) of 1817.

P. 57 *note* 1. Antonio Magliabecchi (died 1747) left his library of 30,000 volumes to Florence. It is the foundation of the Biblioteca Nazionale (*Minerva*).

TO ESSAY III.

*** *Note that in this essay the quotations from the* CONVIVIO *are not always continuous, even when printed continuously.*

As far as concerns Witte's special conception of Dante's life and work, this must be regarded as the most important of his essays. Here at last, after nearly fifty years, he works out in detail the hypothesis which he had launched upon the world in his youthful challenge. Here too he takes stock of the objections that have been urged against him, and formulates his hypothesis in its ultimate shape. And this is therefore the appropriate place for pointing out the unsolved difficulties which still remain, and for giving ourselves an account of our general attitude towards Dr. Witte's theory.

I shall attempt to set forth as briefly and clearly as possible the scope of the controversy and the points in which Dr. Witte's solution appears to be unsatisfactory. In doing so I cannot profess to aim at impartiality in the sense of suppressing my own strong opinion or refraining from arraying the evidence in its support; but I hope I shall give no ground for a charge of straining a controversial point. Indeed, I could wish that in all polemics writers would make it a rule to be content with *stating* their case and not *pleading* it. I believe that by so doing they would both teach and learn far more than is possible otherwise, and would also make polemics less wearisome and repellent.

It is admitted on all hands, then, that Dante was conscious of having in some way fallen from a state of grace after Beatrice's death, so that repentance and reconciliation were necessary before she could again become his guide and lead him through Paradise. The record of this repentance and reconciliation is contained in the thirtieth and thirty-first cantos of the *Purgatory*. The only matters on which there is difference of opinion are, 1st, the nature of the lapse from the state of grace with which Dante had to reproach himself, and, 2nd, the relation which the *Convivio* bears to this phase of his life.

It will probably be admitted that a first reading of the passages in the *Purgatory* will impress every reader with the feeling that Dante's unfaithfulness to his ideal had consisted in some kind of moral aberration. But this is not conclusive. First impressions are subject to correction from deeper and more extended study. Dr. Witte maintains that such a correction is needed in the present case. He tells us that it can be proved from Dante's express statements that his lapse consisted, in the main, in an alienation from religion and theology in favour of a presumptuous human philosophy. But we must note that he expressly includes as a

subordinate factor of Dante's unfaithfulness a morally unworthy life. In §§ xx.-xxii. of the essay on Gemma Donati (pp. 247-254) he maintains, against Scartazzini, that it was a life of moral, not intellectual, aberration which Dante shared with Forese Donati, 'the present memory of which' was 'still grievous' when he met him in Purgatory (*Purg.* xxiii. 115 *sq.*). And in the essay on 'Dante' (p. 13) he supposes that 'when once his thoughts were turned to this transitory life of earth, it may well be that his receptive spirit sometimes allowed access to new charms of mortal beauty.' But to Dr. Witte all this is secondary and incidental. The main sin which Dante laments in the presence of Beatrice is, he thinks, alienation from religion and theology. In the face, however, of the objections raised by Klaczko and others, Dr. Witte makes certain concessions or admissions. What do they amount to? and what does Dr. Witte still maintain? The admissions, though inevitable, are startlingly extensive. Dante was not 'even attracted' to the coarse or refined forms of Epicurean unbelief prevalent in Florence in his day (pp. 80, 81). He never gave 'even temporary adhesion to a heresy inimical to the Church or to religion generally' (p. 84); he was far from 'refusing to accept the truths of religion unless they can stand before the tests of philosophy'; he recognised in principle that those truths 'rest on a higher and independent basis' (p. 84); and he likens theology to the empyrean heaven, because it 'suffereth not any contention of opinions, or of sophistical arguments, because of the most excellent certainty of its subject, which is God' (pp. 72, 73).

In what respect, then, is it still maintained that Dante had indulged in intellectual speculation which constituted an alienation from religion and called for such bitter repentance? The answer is, that he had allowed to Philosophy a parallel and independent authority over against Theology and the Church; so that, whereas religious truth was not to be regarded as dependent on philosophical proof, yet neither was philosophical truth dependent on religious sanction; and indeed a proposition might, at the same time, be theologically true and philosophically erroneous. 'It would appear by no means strange if he too had trodden the path along which Anselm had already set out to unfold the eternal truths by the light of pure reason as if there were no Holy Scripture; the path along which the *Philosophi Puri* had pressed ever farther, till they reached the extreme position we have already described' (p. 84). 'Surely this must force us to admit that at this stage of his development the doctrine of the Church and the teaching of Averroës had equal authority in his eyes, and he might, like the scholastic *puri philosophi*, have declared that the same proposition might be theological truth and philosophical error' (p. 85). This, then, is the ultimate form in which Dr. Witte thinks that he can establish Dante's philosophical apostasy. But it is strange that so candid and diligent a scholar should have failed to notice that this charge of placing philosophy *on the same level of authority* as the Church, is expressly precluded in so many words, by Dante himself, in the fifteenth chapter of the fourth book of the *Convivio*. In this chapter Dante maintains as a link in his argument that all men have one common origin, and declares

that his opponents must admit the same 'if they are Christians.' He now shows that the Philosophers (Aristotle) and the Gentiles (*i.e.* the poets, such as Ovid) hold the same opinion; but, he adds (lines 90 *sq.*), his poem 'says Christians, and does not say Philosophers or Gentiles (though their opinions, too, are opposed to my adversaries), *because the Christian opinion is of greater force, and shatters all cavil*, thanks to the supreme light of Heaven which illuminates it.'

Nor must it be thought that I am taking advantage of the phrase in which Dr. Witte happens ultimately to formulate his statement of Dante's apostasy; for whenever he puts his account of Dante's state of belief, or attitude of mind, into a form which can, by any stretch, be regarded as culpable, he inevitably falls into direct contradiction with Dante's expressions in the *Convivio*. For example, on page 13 we read (the italics are my own): 'He (Dante) is infatuated by *spiritual pride*, which persuades him that *his own intellect is capable of fathoming the hidden things of Eternity*'; and on page 14 we hear of 'the *presumptuous speculations* of the intellect concerning things which must ever remain unfathomable to it.' On page 74 it is implied that only after his conversion Dante comes to see 'that the human spirit *can never attain a knowledge of eternal truths by following its own independent path*.' But in the *Convivio* (ii. 6 : 16) we read that Christ 'was the light which illumines us in our darkness, as saith John the Evangelist, and he told us the truth concerning these things [the angelic beings, as to whom Aristotle and Plato speculated imperfectly], *which we might not know without him*, nor see as they are in truth.' In like manner, when discussing the question of immortality, he cites, as usual, philosophic authority, and then proceeds: 'And further, we are certified thereof by the most true teaching of Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the light: the way, because by it we go unimpeded to the belief of this immortality; the truth, because it suffereth no error; the light, because it enlightens us in the darkness of worldly ignorance. This teaching, I say, assures us above all other reasons, because He gave it us, who sees and measures our immortality, the which we cannot perfectly see whilst our immortal is mingled with mortal; but *we see it perfectly by faith; and by reason we see it with a shade of obscurity*, the which cometh by the mingling of the mortal with the immortal. And this should be the most potent argument' (*Convivio* ii. 9 : 114 *sq.*). And again: 'It is no marvel if Divine Providence, which surpasses all angelic and human perception, many a time proceeds by ways hidden from us; for many times even human operations conceal their intent from men themselves. But *it is matter for great marvel when the execution of the eternal counsel proceedeth so openly that our reason discerns it*' (*Convivio* iv. 5 : 1 *sq.*).

Even on such a point as the question whether the diurnal movement of the heaven of Venus is presided over by a special intelligence, or whether it is due to the sweep of the *primum mobile*, he declares that it would be 'presumptuous' to pretend to determine (*Convivio* ii. 6 : 150). Cf. No. 56 and p. 86.

The truth is that even if Dr. Witte's thesis that Dante's sin consisted

mainly in presumptuous philosophical aberrations can be established, we shall still be compelled, in the long-run, frankly to admit that there is no trace whatever of such a state of mind in the *Convivio*. 'Holy Church which cannot lie' (ii. 4 : 31) throughout secures unqualified respect and loyalty. The miracles of Christ, 'who created our reason, and whose will it was that that reason should fall short of his power,' are the 'most chiefest foundation of our faith' (iii. 7 : 162 *sq.*). Nay, Religion itself is the true Philosophy; faith, hope, and charity are the three virtues 'by which we rise to philosophise in that celestial Athens where the Stoics, the Peripatetics, and the Epicureans, by the art of the eternal Truth, harmoniously unite in one will' (iii. 14 : 136).

The careful reader will not have failed to notice that Witte himself declares that the philosophers whom Dante studied had 'received a sort of second baptism,' and that 'even when, and in so far as the Church had set aside their conclusions as erroneous, the evil will, which alone is worthy of punishment, was absent' (p. 90). And in another essay he declares that 'Dante, enlightened perhaps by his own experience, did not demand any special expiation' from 'those who were led astray while honestly searching for the truth,' but 'if they had repented and submitted once more to the Church, he places them at once completely in line with those who had never swerved from their faith' (p. 140). Where then would be the room for such bitter shame as Dante experiences in the presence of Beatrice (since there was nothing worthy of punishment, and no expiation was needed), even if he had been obliged to withdraw from an erroneous position? But, as a matter of fact, Dante, while withdrawing special opinions that he had put forth in the *Convivio*, never does withdraw from the general attitude towards the philosophers which he there adopts. Dr. Witte points out his affectionate reverence for Averroës and his high esteem for Abbot Joachim *after* his supposed conversion, and calls attention to the fact that he still appeals to Aristotle in the first rank when rehearsing his proofs of the existence of God (p. 88). On Dr. Witte's own showing it is difficult to see in what essential respect Dante's attitude differs before and after his conversion.

Though unwilling to protract this discussion, I can hardly avoid noticing the passage on which Dr. Witte lays such great stress,—the one passage in which he thinks that he can find direct evidence that Dante co-ordinated philosophy, as represented by Averroës, with the authority of the Church (p. 85; cf. p. 72, No. 44). I cannot but think that the force of Dr. Witte's argument rests on a misapprehension. The usual scholastic form under which a subject is treated is that of a question. For instance, Thomas Aquinas sets out his proof of the existence of God under 'Part I. Question 2, *Whether God exists.*' The student who found the argument difficult, might say, I suppose, that he was much perplexed by the 'Question, *Whether God exists* (*an Deus sit*),' without for a moment implying that he had any kind of doubt of the existence of the Divine Being. Now, in Dante's allegorical language, the student who is baffled in his studies is said to find his lady's sweet looks alienated from him. This, he says, was the case

with himself, 'especially in those parts wherein I considered and investigated whether the First Matter of the elements *era da Dio intesa*' (*Convivio* iv. 1 : 63). Granting *da Dio intesa* to mean 'created by God' (a matter on which I confess to grave doubts), the passage, I take it, does not imply that Dante regarded the question between Averroës and the Church as an open one, but merely that he was studying the 'Question, *Utrum prima materia*, etc.,' and was baffled in his attempts to master it.

It is, of course, obvious that the *Convivio* is spiritually and theologically less mature than the *Paradiso*. And specifically we find in the latter portions of the fourth book of the *Convivio* a much less precise and firmly held delimitation of the territories of reason and revelation, the practical and the contemplative life, the Empire and the Church, than can be found in the *Comedy* (or for the matter of that in the *Monarchia*, which Witte puts many years before the *Convivio*), but this is development, not conversion; a deepening and defining, not a change, of mental and spiritual attitude.

As to the further attenuation of Witte's hypothesis by which Scartazzini (*Prolegomeni*, 228 *sq.*; *Companion to Dante*, 230, 237 *sq.*) maintains that Dante's sin was culpable lack of interest in Theology during the *Convivio* period of his life, I need only say that I think the student will find more numerous and emphatic references to the Church and her doctrines in the *Convivio* than he will be able to detect in the Aristotelian treatises of Thomas Aquinas. If Dante needed repentance on this score so did St. Thomas. Indeed, the analogy is very close—and very instructive. I can only regard Scartazzini's interpretation as an attempt to underprop the edifice raised by Witte, and so save the trouble of rebuilding, though the foundation is allowed to have given way.[1]

But the relation of the *Convivio* to Dante's mental history, though emphasised repeatedly by Dr. Witte, is not absolutely essential to his general theory. It would be possible definitely to abandon the contention that the *Convivio* reflects the mind of Dante during his apostasy, and still maintain that that apostasy itself was primarily philosophical. And here at first sight Dr. Witte appears to be on much firmer ground, though here too there is at least one objection which appears to me conclusive—I mean the failure of his system to give any adequate account of the place of Virgil in the scheme of the *Comedy*. Reserving our consideration of this point, let us sum up Dr. Witte's main proofs of his position. I notice, in passing, that the portion of the argument which rests on the *Canzoni*, especially Nos. 30 to 34, is open to grave objection; for it assumes that *all* the poems referred to are addressed to philosophy, whereas one of them (*Canz.* vi. in Dr. Witte's numbering) is with good reason taken by many students as referring to Beatrice herself; and two more, *Canz.* vii. and x., must be regarded, by all but

[1] Many of the points urged above will be found in Bartoli, Hettinger, Scartazzini, etc.

the extremest school of allegorists, as addressed to actual women; leaving only two which can reasonably be read as allegorical references to philosophy. But after all, these poems are only introduced by Dr. Witte in a quite subsidiary manner. The main outlines of his argument are firmly based on the *Vita Nuova*, the *Convivio*, and the *Comedy*. We may summarise it thus:

1. Dante's mind was alienated from Beatrice by the 'Lady of the Window' (*Vita Nuova*).
2. The 'Lady of the Window' is Philosophy (*Convivio*); therefore Dante's mind was alienated from Beatrice by Philosophy (also directly affirmed in the *Convivio*).
3. But Beatrice is Theology or Religion (*Comedy*); therefore Dante's mind was alienated from Religion by Philosophy.

The extreme difficulty of accepting this conclusion has, so far as I am aware, never been met or even noticed by Dr. Witte or any of his disciples. Virgil is admitted to represent human philosophy; and Virgil is not the seducer who draws Dante away from Beatrice, but the emissary that brings him back to her. He takes precisely the position assigned to human philosophy by the schoolmen; and the relation accurately represents the attitude of Dante's mind with respect to his philosophical studies in the *Convivio*. Indeed, as already hinted, the *Convivio* might very well be described as an attempt to throw into popular form the matter of the Aristotelian treatises of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas. But if human philosophy (including Aristotelian philosophy) symbolised in the person of Virgil, is the redeeming power that rescues Dante from the tangled forest and brings him back to Beatrice, how can familiarity with that very philosophy be the tangled forest itself?

The slight and incidental references to Virgil on pages 15 and 49 are wholly inadequate to meet this difficulty. On page 70 Dr. Witte notes that the supposed seducing philosophy is represented, in the first instance, by Cicero and Boethius, and he points out that Cicero is a heathen writer, whereas he reminds us elsewhere that Virgil (p. 15) enjoyed at least a fore-gleam of Christian truth. But in the opinion of the Middle Ages, Boethius, whom Dante associates with Cicero, was in the enjoyment, not of a fore-gleam, but of the full glory of the Christian truth. Dante meets him in the Heaven of the Sun (*Par.* x. 121), whereas Virgil is condemned to 'eternal exile' (*Purg.* xxi. 18, and elsewhere). We must therefore regard the difficulty now raised as retaining its full force.

The impossibility of the conclusion (that Philosophy, who is admitted to be the first instrument of redemption, is also the seducer), amounting to a *reductio ad absurdum*, throws us back on a re-examination of the argument by which it is reached, and we find that its apparent cogency is due to the assumption that Dante's scheme of symbolism throughout the three works is uniform and consistent. Now we have certainly no right to assume the contrary of this, and it may be urged that the antecedent probabilities are in its favour; but it cannot be taken as an axiom, and it must yield to an examination of the facts, should they

prove to be hostile to it. And I think they do. Dr. Witte's attempt to maintain the consistency of the representations in the *Vita Nuova* and the *Convivio* will hardly satisfy the careful reader of the two works themselves. In the *Vita Nuova* Dante apparently comes under the influence of the 'donna gentile,' soon after the first anniversary of Beatrice's death; in the *Convivio* not till after two revolutions of Venus (nearer three years than two); in the *Vita Nuova* the whole period of estrangement covers 'certain days,' and is followed by a repentant return to Beatrice; in the *Convivio* its initial phase covers thirty months, and its vigour an indefinite period, of the close of which we have no indication.[1] The *Vita Nuova* contains a sonnet (No. 22) recording the conflict between the *core* (heart) and the *anima* (soul); the *core* pleading for the 'donna gentile' and the *anima* for Beatrice; and Dante tells us that he wrote this in order that his state might be known to others; and also that the *core* means appetite or inclination, and the *anima* reason. In the *Convivio* he gives us a canzone avowedly written with reference to the very same circumstances and persons that inspired the sonnet of the *Vita Nuova*; and here again the controversy is between the *core* and the *anima*, the *core* taking the side of the 'donna gentile,' and the *anima* that of Beatrice. But here the poet warns us with emphasis, not to say with a certain asperity, and with obvious reference to his assertions in the *Vita Nuova*, 'Be it known that in all this canzone, according to one sense [literally] and the other [allegorically] *core* is to be taken for the inward self (*secreto d'entro*) and not for any other special part, either of the soul or of the body'; and he declares that he did not reveal his real state because no one would have believed it (*Convivio* ii. 7 : 20; 13 : 63). Without entering now upon the question whether the events Dante allegorises in the *Convivio* had originally an objective reality which is literally recorded in the *Vita Nuova*,—a point on which Dr. Witte himself seems to be in doubt (pp. 78, 79),—we must at least admit that these apparent inconsistencies shake our confidence in any inferences that rest on the supposition of a rigid consistency of the scheme of symbolism in the *Vita Nuova* and the *Convivio*.

Nor is it possible to find a consistent scheme common to the *Convivio* and the *Comedy*. In the *Comedy* Virgil represents human, and Beatrice, divine philosophy. In the *Convivio* undifferentiated philosophy, including both its human and its divine aspects, is symbolised under the

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[1] The passage on Alfraganus in the original (p. 95) runs: 'Prof. Boehmer macht mich indess sehr richtig darauf aufmerksam, dass hier von dem Durchmessen des Epicyklus die Rede ist, wofür Alferganus (Ed. Golius, p. 17) 564, und Ptolomaeus im Almagest noch etwas genauer 583 neun zehntel, Tage angibt.' The passage occurs on p. 65 (not 17) of Golius' edition of Alfraganus, and the period is given as one Persian year, seven months, and nearly nine days. Prof. Schiaparelli (in Lubin's *Dante e gli Astronomi Italiani*, Trieste, 1895, p. 44) works this out, on the data of Alfraganus himself, to nearly 584 days. I suppose therefore that Witte's 564 is simply a misprint for 584, and have corrected it accordingly.

'donna gentile.' In neither is there any conflict or rivalry between the higher and the lower, the human and the divine, philosophy.

But, it may be urged, in the *Convivio* at least, philosophy is the rival, and for a time the victorious rival, of Beatrice. This is perfectly true; but there is nothing whatever to show that either in the *Vita Nuova* or in the *Convivio* Beatrice, in any specific sense, represents religion or theology. On the contrary, she is simply the blessed spirit now in heaven, the last mention of whom in 'this book' (the *Convivio*) is fitly linked with the assertion of the immortality of the *human soul* (ii. 9 : 49). Every unsophisticated reader will feel the force of Dr. Witte's beautiful words (p. 10) in speaking of Dante's love for Beatrice: 'No need to call a love like this the allegory of piety; it is itself a vision of God upon earth.' In Dante's conception of Beatrice, then, the personal element was still so preponderating as to be all-absorbing. Her symbolic significance was inherent and implicit, not erected into explicit and conscious parallelism with her personal significance. At such a time, had Dante felt a growing interest in the study of the most orthodox theology stealing his thoughts away from the sweet image and memory of Beatrice, Theology herself would have been Beatrice's rival. The *Convivio*, then, does indeed tell us how Philosophy (including Theology) was for a time the victorious rival of Beatrice. But then in the *Convivio* Beatrice is not Theology. In the *Comedy* she is indeed Theology, but then Philosophy is not her rival but her redeeming emissary.

The argument therefore appears to be as unsafe as the conclusion is impossible.

There remains, however, one passage which seems at first sight to bear strong witness to the truth of Dr. Witte's hypothesis, and until some unforced and adequate account of it (which I confess myself unable to offer) is given, the general question must be subject to reconsideration, even though Dr. Witte's hypothesis be felt to be in no case tenable. It is the passage in the concluding canto of the *Purgatory* (lines 82 *sq.*; cf. p. 75, No. 55), in which Beatrice purposely speaks in language which Dante cannot understand, and declares that she does so in order that he may recognise 'that school' which he has followed, and see how far it falls short of the comprehension of divine things. When Dante answers that he was not aware that he had ever strayed away from her at all, she answers that the very fact of his having forgotten that he had strayed from her shows that that straying was not guiltless; for it is only guilty memories which have been washed away by Lethe. Now the most natural way to understand this passage certainly is to take Beatrice as first condemning the school in which Dante has studied as *inadequate*, and then (when he declares that he is not aware of ever having studied in any other school than hers at all) to go on to denounce his forgotten studies in the said school as *guilty*. It is natural enough that this should be taken by Dr. Witte as an express confirmation of his hypothesis; but in reality it proves too much. Dante comes to Beatrice fresh from the teaching *of Virgil*; his is 'that school' in which Dante has just studied, and which Beatrice shows to be so inadequate.

Now, it is impossible, on Dr. Witte's hypothesis or any other, to suppose that Beatrice regards it as a guilty thing on Dante's part to have given himself over to the guidance of Virgil, whom she herself despatched to his aid. The guilt of straying away from Beatrice cannot therefore be identical with study under that inadequate school which at any rate brings him back to her, though it does not in itself enable him to understand her. This is not the place for a more elaborate examination of this very difficult passage. We may, as far as the present matter is concerned, leave it as a *locus desperatus*, but in no case does it seem, when closely examined, really to support Dr. Witte's hypothesis. If the reader, however, thinks that this is pressing a controversial point too far, I must leave him to reconcile, as best he may, this isolated statement with the general structure of the *Comedy* and the character of the *Convivio*.

It would be unsuitable here to attempt in any detail a rival treatment of the relations between the *Vita Nuova*, the *Convivio*, and the *Comedy*; but the reader may fairly ask whether I have anything to substitute for Dr. Witte's attempt to relate these three works. I will therefore indicate in briefest outline the view which seems to me most in harmony with the facts. Dante tells us that one of his objects in writing the *Convivio* was to remove the 'infamy' which would attach to him in the minds of the readers of his Canzoni, and intimates, not obscurely, that he refers to the earthly passion which some of those Canzoni breathe (i. 2 : 114 *sq.*). He is going to explain that in reality they are allegorical, and therefore do not tell of any earthly passion at all. Now there is not one of the three Canzoni actually commented on which could be spoken of, however understood, as reflecting 'infamy' upon its author. The one that stands at the head of the second book, even if taken literally, tells us nothing which has not been told in the *Vita Nuova*, and Dante is far from regarding that work as reflecting 'infamy' upon him, though he seems a little shamefaced about its youthful lack of virility (i. 1 : 111 *sq.*). But amongst the Canzoni which Witte and others include, with excellent reason, amongst the poems which were to have been commented upon in the unwritten books of the *Convivio*, there are at least two which fully explain Dante's uneasiness. They are the poems beginning respectively '*Amor, dacchè convien pur ch'io mi doglia*' and '*Così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro*.' The first of these is very safely identified with the poem referred to in Letter iii. (to Maroello Malaspina). See above, pp. 213 *sq.*, and below, Appendix VIII. The second, which is by far the more important of the two for our present purpose, is practically certified as a work of Dante's by the use Petrarch makes of its opening line in his Canzone '*Lasso me, ch' i non so in qual parte pieghi*,' and is identified as the intended text of Book vii. of the *Convivio* by a comparison of line 36 with *Con.* iv. 26 : 66. These two Canzoni are poems of great force and splendour, but they unmistakably breathe an earthly passion in every line. The attempt to allegorise them is bold indeed. Opinions may differ as to the degree of moral deflection, whether of mind or of life, which

they indicate, or whether so strong a word as 'infamy' is justified in connection with them; but in any case they indicate a state of passion alien alike from the spirit of the *Vita Nuova* and of the *Paradiso*, and inconsistent with the lofty and prophetic tone assumed in the *Convivio*.

We have seen that there is abundant reason (admitted by Dr. Witte himself) to believe that after Beatrice's death Dante failed to retain the moral elevation into which he was lifted 'by her youthful eyes' (*Purg.* xxx. 122). During this period he may have written these Canzoni. This period is symbolised in the *Comedy* by his wandering in the tangled forest. He is rescued from this moral disorder, or unworthiness, by his study of Philosophy. His ancient hope to write of Beatrice 'what ne'er was writ of woman' (*Vita Nuova*, § 43) revives; but he is not ready for the task. In the first place his passion now is for the study of Philosophy. Beatrice has a rival even in his higher life. Indeed he has found in Philosophy a 'better' guide (*Convivio* ii. 16: 55). And in the second place there are elements in his recent past which cannot be brought into immediate association with Beatrice. He must proceed to get rid of them; but he takes the false path of striving to get rid of them by explaining them away.

So he begins the *Convivio* with the twofold purpose of glorifying his present mistress (Philosophy), and of explaining away such part of his own reputation as seems inconsistent with the high missionary purpose he now entertains. He will allegorise all his Canzoni addressed to mortal women, other than Beatrice. Even the innocent Canzone '*Voi che intendendo il terzo ciel movete*' offers difficulties. It cannot be allegorised without a certain disingenuousness. But as Dante approaches the other canzoni his conscience revolts from the task. His past stands between him and 'that blessed Beatrice' of whom he does not 'purpose to speak further in this book.' Like Ibsen's Peer Gynt, he is striving to 'get round' the obstacles between himself and his ideal instead of 'going through' them. And the very attempt to dissociate Beatrice from his ethical and philosophical enthusiasm only concentrates his attention upon her; and his inmost consciousness feels that this higher moral and intellectual life must seek alliance with her memory, not estrangement from it. The experiences of 1310-1313 pass his whole nature through the furnace, and teach him that he can build on naught save the eternal truth. He sees his error. Such things in his past life as part him from Beatrice are not to be explained away, but bitterly repented. He deluded himself when he said that Philosophy was Beatrice's rival. Her only rivals are the world and the flesh. As for Philosophy, in its lower aspect it is Beatrice's emissary, in its higher aspect Beatrice's self. His study of Philosophy has led him back to her. He re-reads his own mental history, he reconstructs his scheme of symbolism. The *Convivio* is cast aside, superseded in its mechanism, and damned by its taint of disingenuousness. His studies in Philosophy (always guided by Theology, as the *Convivio* clearly enough shows) have deepened and purified his life, till at last, in spite of himself, they have brought him back, in an agony of shame, to Beatrice, now glorified into the symbol of Theology herself,—and the *Comedy* is born.

TO ESSAY IV.

In reading this singularly beautiful and instructive essay, the reader will probably be startled by the passage on p. 108, in which so unsatisfactory an interpretation is given to the significance of the three lower planets. The qualifications on the following page partly contradict but do not at all justify it. Leaving the reader to make his own detailed criticisms on the passage, we may attempt a more satisfactory explanation of the general significance of the scheme of the *Paradiso*.

The reference to the four Cardinal Virtues in the higher planetary heavens is sufficiently obvious. The Sun, which illumines all other heavenly bodies, and contains the spirits of the sages and the doctors of the Church, corresponds with Prudence, the virtue that guides all the rest (cf. *Purg.* xxix. 132). Mars corresponds to Fortitude; the equable Jupiter, where are the spirits of just rulers, to Justice; and Saturn, the patron of the Golden Age (cf. *Purg.* xxii. 148), whose star is now the seat of the anchorites, corresponds to Temperance. This vindication of a place for the moral virtues in the structure of Paradise itself, where their functions have been absorbed into rapturous contemplation, is very noteworthy. The tone and colour, so to speak, of the heavenly fruition of the blessed is affected by the nature of the moral warfare through which they rose to spiritual victory.

But what of the three theological virtues, which we should expect to find particularly prominent in the *Paradiso*? They appear to receive a twofold treatment. First, a negative treatment in the lower spheres which still bear traces of imperfection. Here we find,

1. In the Moon, want of sufficient *faith* in the nuns who have, under pressure, broken their vows.
2. In Mercury, the earthly substitute, ambition, for the heavenly *hope*, which is the second of the theological virtues. It must be borne in mind that, in the terminology of the theologians, hope means specifically the hope of heaven. The souls in Mercury have been actuated, not by the hope of heaven, but by the hope of earthy glory or credit.
3. In Venus we have the souls of those in whose lives earthly love has taken the place of *charity* or heavenly love.

Thus while the *variety* of the higher spheres is partly determined by the relative stress of the moral virtues through practice of which they were attained, the *gradations* of the lower ones are caused by weakness or perversion of the theological virtues.

The second and positive treatment of the theme is of course found in the heaven of the fixed stars, where the three pillar apostles receive Dante's profession of Faith, Hope, and Love.

TO ESSAY V.

THERE are several points in this essay on which notes seem desirable.[1]

I. Page 127, No. v. *Aristotle's Threefold Division of Immoral Actions.* Cf. p. 147.

The relation of Aristotle's threefold division of things to be morally shunned (*Circa mores fugienda* of the Latin translation) to the system of the *Inferno* can by no means be dismissed after the summary fashion adopted by Dr. Witte in this section. Whether we are to take the classifications of *Inf.* xi. 22 *sq.* and xi. 79 *sq.* as identical in substance and differing only in phraseology, or whether, on the other hand, we are to regard the latter passage as an incidental reference that has no organic relation to the general scheme of Hell, depends chiefly upon whether we can identify the *bestialitade* (brutishness) of l. 82 with the *forza* (violence) of l. 24. Dr. Witte and others think we cannot, whereas Wegele, Scartazzini, and others unhesitatingly declare that we must, thus equate 'brutishness' and 'violence.' By the 'Violent' Virgil understands, 1st, cruel tyrants, murderers, and highway robbers; 2nd, suicides and gambling squanderers of their substance; 3rd, blasphemers and sinners against nature. Let us begin by inquiring what Aristotle understood by 'brutishness' (*bestialitas* of the Latin translation). The Commentators complain of a certain confusion in the opening portions in the 7th Book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*; but the points which bear specifically upon the matter in hand seem to be sufficiently clear. Aristotle (vii. 5. 1.) distinguishes between things which are naturally pleasant on the one hand, and things which are naturally repulsive, and become pleasant only to morbid and depraved appetites on the other hand. Those who are attracted by these latter are the 'brutish.' It will be seen at once that this general description answers closely to the character of the denizens of the circle of the Violent. They disinterestedly hate or violate God, themselves, and their neighbours, all of which are the objects of natural affection (cf. *Purg.* xvii. 106 *sq.*; *Convivio* i. 1 : 55 *sq.*). If we go on to examine Aristotle's specific instances of 'brutishness' we find some striking coincidences. The case of Phalaris is mentioned as an illustration, apparently because of some specific abomination of a cannibalistic character that was attributed to him (vii. 5. 2 and 7); but Thomas Aquinas, in his Lecture v. on the 7th Book of the *Ethics*, explains it simply as a reference to his well-known cruelty. Phalaris found a disinterested

[1] First a note on a special point. I cannot trace the assertion ascribed to Scarabelli on p. 139. Cf. his *Esempl. della D. C.*, i. 181, and his 1866 ed. of Jac. della Lana, i. 242, where he defends the reading in question. Christina, Princess of Belgioioso (near Pavia), known as an author and a patriot (b. 1808, d. 1871), was a daughter of the Marchese Trivulzio of Milan, who owned a magnificent collection of Dante MSS. I gather from Dr. Witte's words that one of these was given to the Princess, and that it passed back (by purchase or bequest?) into the Trivulzio Library at her (or her husband's) death.

delight in the tortures of men (*in ipsis cruciatibus hominum delectabatur*). And in any case, a little lower down (5. 5) excessive cruelty is mentioned as one of the brutish passions. Thus the denizens of the first belt of the Violent (or at any rate the worst of them) are categorically included amongst Aristotle's 'brutish.' With respect to the second belt, we find no mention in Aristotle of suicide amongst the acts of 'brutishness,' but according to the doctrine repeatedly expounded by Aquinas, and expressly adopted by Dante (*Purg.* xvii. 108), self-hatred is, humanly speaking, impossible, and therefore suicide is one of those monstrous and inhuman perversions by which death, supposed to be most repulsive of all things to the natural man, becomes the object of a morbid desire. The other denizens of the second belt may be brought under the 'excessive folly' (*insipientia* of the Latin translation) regarded by Aristotle as brutish (5. 5); and it is further to be noted that elsewhere (*Eth. Nic.* iv. 1. 5) Aristotle declares prodigality to be 'a kind of destruction of oneself.' In excess therefore it would be a sort of suicide. In belt three the case is too clear to need much elaboration. The leading sin of this belt is specified by Aristotle as a case of 'brutishness' (5. 3), and is again and again specifically denounced as *bestialitas* by Aquinas. Dr. Witte implies, on page 128, that the presence of Guido Guerra and the other 'worthy ones' in the circle of the Violent is sufficient proof that 'violence' is not identical with 'brutishness'; and it may be true enough, as he says, that Dante would never have admitted that these men had 'by their brutishness entirely forfeited those gifts which distinguish men from animals,' for a man may not be utterly brutish and inhuman although he has been guilty of a brutish and inhuman sin; but as far as the sin itself is concerned, it is simply a matter of fact that Dante attributes to these men an offence which is specifically scheduled by Aristotle as 'brutish,' and as showing (see below) the *non-existence of the specifically human characteristics* in the offender who is guilty of it; and in like manner it is again and again declared by the schoolmen to be outside the range of even sinful humanity, and therefore to be pre-eminently brutish. An indefinite number of references might be given in support of this, but let one suffice (Thomas Aquinas' Commentary on the *Sentences*, Bk. iii. Dist. 37, *expositio textus*).

It is true, as one would naturally expect it to be, that Aristotle does not include blasphemy amongst the brutish sins; but its inclusion under the general category of monstrous impulses counter to the primal natural affections would be a matter of course with a Christian writer (cf. *Purg.* xvii. 109 *sq.*).

Lastly, usury is not mentioned by Aristotle as a case of brutishness. But it is quite in the spirit both of the Aristotelian and of the Christian systems to regard usury as a sin against nature, though it cannot, without some violence, be brought under the ruling idea of 'brutishness.'

We have seen then that a great portion of the sins found amongst the 'Violent' are directly specified by Aristotle as 'brutish,' and that the rest (with one possible exception) would naturally range themselves, in the

mind of a Christian writer, under his general description of 'brutishness' as the love of things naturally repulsive.

The only enormities which Aristotle includes under 'brutishness,' and which are *not* represented amongst the denizens of the seventh circle, are excessive cowardice and morbid forms of appetite, in the narrower sense, such as gnawing earth or cinders, eating raw meat, and cannibalism of various general and specific kinds. He does, indeed, add the morbid habit of plucking out hairs and gnawing the nails; but though these are not characteristic of the denizens of the seventh circle itself, it will not escape the reader's notice that the Minotaur—the guardian of the whole circle—is specially said to gnaw himself in his rage (*Inf.* xii. 14).

And this leads to the remark that all the guardians and tormentors of this circle are either beasts (the black bitches) or forms of mingled man and animal (the Minotaur, the Centaurs, the Harpies). Surely this is not accidental; and it is another reason for identifying the inhabitants of this circle with the 'brutish.'

So far, then, as the positive characteristics of Aristotle's 'brutish' and of the 'violent' denizens of the seventh circle are concerned, it is impossible to deny that there is an almost complete coincidence between them both in the general principle and in the specific instances.

We are now in a position to take up the question in its more general aspect. In *Inf.* xi. 22 *sq.* Virgil (following Cicero) divides 'malice' (*malitia*) into that which injures others by violence and that which injures them by fraud. This division takes no account of the incontinent sinners through whose circles the poets have already passed. When Dante, puzzled by this omission, asks for further explanations, he is met with a somewhat sharp rebuke; he ought to have solved the problem himself by reference to the threefold division of the *Ethics*, the division, viz., into malice, incontinence, and brutishness. Now, the question is, Does Virgil mean that Dante ought to have recognised, under the Ciceronian terminology, the Aristotelian division of sins with which he was extremely familiar,[1] and which supplied the supplement omitted by Cicero; or does he mean that he ought to have introduced a gloss upon his words, derived from a system wholly alien to the one he was expounding?

Let us look at the two systems. According to Virgil, following Cicero, *malice* (which aims at injury) is divided into *violence* and *fraud*. According to (the Latin) Aristotle, the graver forms of moral aberration may be classed under *brutishness* and *malice*. The question

[1] Dante was early familiar with this portion of the *Ethics*; he makes use of the quotation from Homer which it contains in the *Vita Nuova* (ii. : 51). He repeatedly quotes it in the *Convivio*; and in the *De Monarchia* (ii. 3 : 56) he cites it as '*in iis quae de moribus fugiendis ad Nicomachum*.' (See the tables in Moore's *Studies in Dante*, 1896.) This interesting form of citation seems to imply the general recognition of Aristotle's treatment of the subject as classical, and to justify Virgil's assumption that it would be in Dante's mind when he was listening to his exposition.

is whether this is the same classification given in other words, or a fresh classification. We have seen that in substance there is a practical coincidence between the Aristotelian 'brutishness' and the Virgilio-Ciceronian 'violence'; and we now note that Virgil, again following Cicero, distinguishes 'fraud' from 'violence' on the ground that the former is an evil *peculiar to man* (*Inf.* xi. 25); that is to say, it is the abuse of the specific human faculty, viz. reason; and therefore a lower place is assigned to it than to violence; and Aristotle (vii. 6. 7), in declaring that 'brutishness' is a lesser evil than 'malice,' though more terrible, illustrates his meaning by explaining that the *best thing in man exists in a corrupt state in the malicious, but does not exist at all in the brutish.* And, further, we note that in order to bring all the denizens of the Malebolge (eighth circle) under the designation of 'fraudulent,' we are driven to give the word so wide an extension as to make it include all abuse of the intellectual gifts, and so make it equivalent to Aristotle's 'malice.' Compare, for instance, the flatterers, the simonists, the astrologers (for Dante was far from believing that astrology was a simple imposture), and the schismatics (*e.g.* Bertram de Born, Curio, Geri del Bello, etc.). There is no inconsistency then in the two classifications as far as their substantive contents are concerned; but the terminology doubtless presents considerable difficulties to the reader who confines his investigations to the Greek text of Aristotle.[1] For if we combine or equate the two classifications,[2] we shall find *malice* (malitia) used in two distinct senses, one of which is a subdivision of the other; for, on the one hand, *brutishness* and *malice* are co-ordinated with each other, and, on the other hand, *violence* and *fraud* (the equivalents of *brutishness* and *malice*) are both of them subdivisions of *malice*. This difficulty, however, entirely disappears if we examine the old Latin Aristotle. In the first place this version uses *malitia* in at least two different senses (as a translation of κακία, vii. 1. 1, and of μοχθηρία, vii. 5. 8), and thus sanctions the phrase *malitia bestialis*, used by Aquinas, as an alternative to *bestialitas*; and in the second place it distinctly states that *bestialitas* (brutishness) is a kind of *malitia*. Aristotle (vii. 1. 2) really declares that *brutishness* 'is a different kind of thing to *malitia* (κακία),' but this is mistranslated in the Latin version into 'is a certain kind of malice' (*quoddam genus malitiae*). Thus *malitia*, in the Latin version, is both the inclusive term and one

[1] It cannot be too much regretted that students of Dante almost always neglect the Latin translations used by Dante. Dr. Witte himself has set us an admirable example in his edition of the *De Monarchia*, in which his citations are invariably taken from the old Latin versions of Aristotle, which we know, or may suppose, were in Dante's hands. These translations, though not very easily obtained, are far from being inaccessible. They will be found, for instance, in the editions of Averroës and of the Aristotelian Commentaries of Thomas Aquinas and others.

[2]

	Cicero.		Aristotle.
Malice	violence	=	brutishness.
	fraud	=	malice.

of the divisions it includes, exactly as it is when we combine the two passages in the *Inferno*. Virgil therefore, from the point of view of the thirteenth- or fourteenth-century scholar, was perfectly justified in assuming that Cicero's classification, as he had expounded it, was identical with Aristotle's, and in rebuking the dulness of his disciple in not recognising it.

With respect to Todeschini's treatment of this subject, summarised by Dr. Witte on p. 147, we have again to regret the want of familiarity with the Latin Aristotle. Todeschini (vol. i. p. 52) supposes that Dante derived his use of the word *malizia* in the Aristotelian passage from 'some old translation of the *Ethics*,' but he does not enter upon any investigations of the matter, and therefore, though he notes (p. 57) the 'rigorously philosophical' use of the word *malizia* in *Inf.* xi. line 82, and its looser use in line 22, he has not the key to explain this, which has been supplied above. Further, he has used Segni's Italian translation of the *Ethics*, which is open to criticism as a translation of the Greek, but is naturally quite unsatisfactory as a representative of the Latin, with which alone we are really concerned. Thus the threefold root of 'brutishness,' of which Dr. Witte makes an effective use on p. 147, assumes a very different complexion if read, not in Segni's translation, but in the old Latin version. It is given twice; first in *Ethics* vii. 1. 3, where the Latin reads '*Fiunt autem quidam, et propter aegritudines et orbitates: et propter malitiam autem hominum superexcedentes, sic superinfamamus.*' And Thomas (Lecture 1.) explains *orbitates* as 'loss of their dear ones, whereby they fall into frenzy and become as it were brutish' (in which connection it may be worth noting that Ovid relates in the *Metamorphoses* how Orpheus, grieving for the final loss of Eurydice, fell into brutish vice). And the confused phrase, '*propter malitiam*, etc.,' he interprets 'because of great access of *malitia*.' It will be seen at once that this leaves no room for Witte's contention that, on the Aristotelian scheme (as understood in Dante's time), brutishness can scarcely be regarded as a fit subject for punishment at all. The other passage is in *Ethics* vii. 5. 1: '*Sed haec quidem propter passiones sive orbitates, haec autem propter consuetudines fiunt, haec autem propter vitiosas naturas.*' It may be noted that in this passage Thomas (Lecture v.) interprets *orbitates* more nearly as Todeschini and modern scholars understand the Greek. But here, too, it is impossible to regard 'brutishness' as merely an affliction, not a moral offence.

It is hardly worth while to point out the error into which some of the Commentators have fallen, in identifying the *brutishness* of *Inf.* xi. 83, not with *violence*, but with *fraud*; and the *malice* of line 82, not with *fraud*, but with *violence*. This blunder has arisen, of course, from the order in which Virgil enumerates '*incontinence, malice*, and mad *brutishness*.' But the order is not essential. It is as legitimate to take the two extremes before the middle term as to follow the direct sequence; and it may be noted that Aristotle himself (vii. 1. 1) observes yet another order in his enumeration, viz. '*malitia, incontinentia et bestialitas.*'

II. Page 139, No. XII. *Heresy.*

The passage in Thomas Aquinas' Commentary on the *Sentences* (Book iv. Distinction 13, Question 2, Article 2, *ad primum*) will be of interest in connection with the treatment of heresy in the *Purgatorio*. 'Heresy is relegated by the saints outside the number of sins which occur among the faithful, as exceeding such, and therefore it is not reckoned amongst the capital sins, nor amongst their offspring. . . . Yet if it must be reduced to some one of the seven capital sins, it may be brought under Pride.'

III. Page 140, No. XIII. *Sluggishness*; cf. pp. 148 *sq.*

The controversy as to the '*accidiosi*' really resolves itself into the question whether 'sluggishness' (*accidia*) can be taken to include 'sulkiness.' A glance at the comparative table of the systems of Hell and Purgatory on p. 120 will show that if the old Commentators were right in placing the '*accidiosi*' as well as the wrathful in the fifth circle of the *Inferno*, we should get a far more symmetrical relation between the two systems than we can obtain otherwise. Nevertheless, the objections urged by Scartazzini, Todeschini, Witte, and others seem to be conclusive, more especially as '*accidia*' is defect of love (*Purg.* xvii. 130 *sq.*). Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, Secunda secundae, Question 35, Article 3, *conclusio*), so that the opposite extreme, if there were such a thing, would be 'excess of love,' not 'anger.' But the truth is that the Aristotelian conception of virtue as a mean fits ill with the Christian teaching, and it is vain to look for any systematic elaboration of it in Dante's ethical systems.

The essential point, however, is that in any case the reader need not do violence to his own instinct and destroy one of the most convincing and penetrating passages in the whole of the *Inferno*, by persuading himself that the 'gloomy' ones who have nursed the 'sluggish fumes' in their hearts are any other than the sulky and sullen beings which they ruefully proclaim themselves to be. If they are '*accidiosi*,' it is only because '*accidia*' includes and implies sullenness.

IV. Pages 149 *sq.*

It seems strange that neither Todeschini nor Witte should have been struck by the idea so obviously suggested by the speculations of the former, that the three circles (of the neutrals, the virtuous heathen, and the heretics) which stand outside the ethical system of the *Inferno*, are connected respectively with the lack of the three theological virtues. Love, in its widest sense, is the source of 'every good work and its contrary' (*Purg.* xviii. 15); and the denizens of the ante-Hell have 'lived without infamy and without praise' (*Inf.* iii. 36); that is to say, have done neither the good nor the evil to which love prompts. Of the denizens in the Limbo Virgil expressly says: 'Without *hope* we live in longing.' The connection between the circle of the heretics and want of *faith* is too obvious to need development.

TO ESSAY VI.

I have inserted an indication of the site of the houses of the Sacchetti, which seems very necessary to enable the reader to follow Witte's argument on pp. 156 *sq.*

P. 160. I do not understand what M. Perrens has done to deserve this implied reproach. I can only find that he makes use (with full acknowledgments) of some of Carbone's data. He does not reproduce his map.

P. 162. The 'Black' Cerchi are a branch of the family. They were Whites, not Blacks, in politics.

Pp. 166 *sq.* The whole of this passage on the Fortress of Altafonte and the supposed necessity of reconstructing Villani's data with respect to the southern boundary of *Florentia Quadrata* is extremely hazardous. The existence of a fortress once held by the family of *Altafronte* in the exact position assigned to it in the maps is guaranteed by a deed of sale of the year 1180, which will be found in Santini's *Documenti dell' Antica Constituzione del Comune di Firenze* (Florence, 1895), p. 522.

It seems obvious that the walls, after following the *Via della Terma*, as Villani says, ran out into a horn expressly to include this fortress commanding the river. I would direct the attention of pilgrims to Florence to the curious little alley running for a short distance along a line that would lead, roughly, from somewhere near the ancient Porta San Maria to Altafonte. Can this be a remnant of the old line of street and wall?

TO ESSAYS VII. AND VIII.

THESE two essays are closely connected, and it might perhaps have been simpler to reverse their order in the volume, since our seventh essay repeatedly assumes and deals with material which is introduced in our eighth. But the justification (such as it is) for the order adopted can be gathered from p. xiii of the Introduction.

The seventh essay, as a whole, makes severer demands upon the reader's attention than any other contained in the volume, and probably few will have the patience to work through all its details. Those few will reap the reward of some insight into the methods and difficulties of historical investigation, a deepened sense of the recklessness with which statements are made, and the corresponding caution with which they must be received, and above all, a profound distrust of the fantastic conjectures started by Troya, which still haunt the current works on Dante, and are a fruitful source of unwarranted assertion and of misconception.

I much regret that Dr. Witte's references and indications are not sufficiently precise to enable me to discover the essays in which Troya works out the more elaborate portions of his theory as to the two Alessandros and as to Guido's two wives. Possibly they were privately

communicated. Under these circumstances, aggravated by the elliptical and allusive style of some of Dr. Witte's arguments, I fear that the reconstruction of Troya's views implied in my translation is occasionally a trifle conjectural. This applies specifically to pp. 196, 197.

With reference to the longest of the discussions of this essay (pp. 190 *sq.*) the reader may consult the remarks below on Dante's supposed letter of condolence; but Mr. A. J. Butler's note on *Inf.* xxx. 79 really hits the nail on the head. 'We have, however, plenty of instances in which private friendship does not hinder him [Dante] from branding misdeeds.'

As to the date (which is of great importance with reference to Dante's biography) of the convention at S. Godenzo, the reader will find it conclusively established as 1302 by Del Lungo, *Dino Compagni*, ii. 562 *sq.*

P. 174. Tolosano's Chronicle will be found in Mittarelli's *Accessiones Faventinæ*. He attributes Tegrimo's surname to the vengeance he took on the Ravennese whenever he had a chance (cap. xi.).

P. 192. Bernardino Azzurini was a Faenzan notary who collected and annotated documents illustrative of the history of Faenza with great diligence. Mittarelli made ample use of his collections, which ultimately came into the possession of the municipality.

Pp. 195, 196. Many readers may be glad to have an explanation of the reference on these pages to the 'Indiction,' as a means of checking dates. The Indiction is a period of fifteen years, and as soon as one Indiction ends another begins. This system of reckoning starts from 313, which is the first year of the first Indiction, 314 being the second, etc., and 327 the fifteenth. Then 328 is the first year of the Indiction again, and so forth. The Indictions themselves are not numbered, but the place of each year in the current Indiction is given. Now the document under discussion contains (in addition to the date, declared by Tonduzzi to be illegible) the statement that the year was the fourteenth of the Indiction. The year 1316 was actually the fourteenth of the Indiction, and travelling backward we find that the next earlier year which is the fourteenth of the Indiction is 1301, which is still too late according to Wüstenfeld's deduction from the fact that Ugolino Fantolini's estate had not yet been partitioned. Travelling back again, the next year that is the fourteenth of the Indiction is 1286.

Essay VIII. has been included in this selection partly because of its historical interest, as containing the announcement of Witte's important discovery, and partly because Dante's letters are not very accessible to the English reader, and he may be glad of any information about them. Since Witte's time, however, a good deal has been written on Dante's letters, and his opinions must not be taken as representing the present state of scholarship. The scepticism which Todeschini confined to the two first letters generally included in the collections of Dante's correspondence has spread until Scartazzini (*Handbook*, Part iv. chap. vi.) has

denied the authenticity of every one of the letters, except that addressed to Henry VII., which he provisionally allows to pass (p. 348); and Kraus (*Dante*, etc., Berlin, 1897, pp. 287 *sq.*) has included even this letter in his wholesale rejection. A more moderate position is taken by Edmund Gardner in chapter vii. of his *Dante's Ten Heavens* (London, 1898); but even he follows Scartazzini in rejecting the letter 'to a Florentine friend.' It is impossible not to regard many of Scartazzini's and more of Kraus's arguments as reckless and self-contradictory; and Gardner does not attempt to give the grounds of his judgment; so that the whole question of the authenticity of Dante's letters must be regarded as awaiting adequate treatment. Meanwhile it is necessary to lay stress on an aspect of the question which is too often neglected. The writers on the subject often speak as though every letter that appears in the collections of Dante's correspondence must either be written by him or be a deliberate forgery; or at most they admit, as a third possibility, that it may be a mere 'literary exercise' or school theme. But these alternatives by no means exhaust the possibilities. It may well be that genuine letters, written under the circumstances which their language implies, may have been falsely or carelessly attributed to Dante by some one who was struck by their suitability to some moment of his life. It is strange that scholars should not have recognised this process as possible, since it is one which they themselves are engaged in conducting. Thus Dr. Witte finds a letter addressed by the exiled Florentine Whites to Nicholas of Ostia, and he concludes that it must have been drawn up by Dante, the letter itself containing no statement or hint to that effect. Henceforth the letter is included under Dante's correspondence, and only too many Dante students set about discussing, not whether Witte was justified in his ascription of the letter to Dante, but whether the letter is a genuine product of Dante's pen, or a forgery palmed off on us as his. Whereas Del Lungo (*Dino Compagni*, ii. 585 *sq.*) has given weighty reasons for supposing that the letter is a genuine one, but written subsequently to the 'affair of Lastra,' and after Dante had completely broken with the exiled Bianchi.

So again, with respect to the second letter—the letter of condolence to Alexander of Romena's nephews. The letter itself does not indicate the writer in any way, and its heading in the MS. is a statement on the part of the scribe, or some one from whom he copied, that the letter was written by Dante to Uberto and Guido. This has every appearance of being a conjectural ascription.

Here, then, we have a letter not itself professing to be written by Dante, but ascribed to him by some unknown copyist. The letter has many signs of genuineness, in the sense of really having been written to Alexander's nephews on the occasion of his death, but very little indication of Dante's authorship. There were plenty of other exiles who might have spoken of Alexander in the terms of this letter. Without supposing it to be a forgery, then, we may very well hold it to be falsely ascribed to Dante; and in that case the whole question of Dante's 'supposed ingratitude' falls to the ground.

The inscription of the third letter to Maroello Malaspina comes much

nearer in form to being an integral part of the letter, though it might perfectly well be the heading of a 'literary exercise,' which did not profess to be anything else. But here the author, if not Dante himself, is obviously closely and skilfully imitating Dante's style, and is writing as in his person. Here, therefore, we have to decide whether we are dealing with Dante himself, or with an extremely skilful imitator who may not have meant to deceive any one, but certainly took a very unwarrantable liberty with Dante's name.

The fourth letter unequivocally professes to be written to the exile of Pistoja by him exiled from Florence counter to his desert, and must be regarded either as really written by Dante or as announcing itself as his. This however might be a perfectly innocent 'literary exercise,' though not proclaiming itself as such.

Letter 9, to the Florentine friend, distinctly professes to be written by Dante, and was copied out by Boccaccio (who makes use of it in his biography), evidently because he believed it to be genuine. Probably few readers will be found to side with Scartazzini and Gardner in rejecting it.

Letters 5, 6, 7, and 8 are either genuine, or deliberately forged for some purpose other than literary. And in considering the question of their authenticity, the adequacy or inadequacy of the supposed motives for forgery, as well as the alleged difficulties (whatever they may be) of accepting them as authentic should be duly considered.

Letter 10 stands on a different footing from the rest. This too must be regarded as either authentic or a deliberate forgery, for, although the author of the *Comedy* is spoken of throughout in the third person, it is obvious that the writer of the epistle identifies himself with him.

The above remarks, while not intended to deal with the substantive question of the authenticity of Dante's letters, will suffice to show that the problem is an essentially different one in the several cases, and must be dealt with in full view of the alternatives which the form of the letter precludes or suggests in each instance.

TO ESSAY IX.

It seemed impossible to omit this essay from our selection. In the first place, the judicial estimate which it contains of the degree and kind of reliance to be placed on Boccaccio's Life is of the highest value, since so many hasty and contradictory judgments on the subject are current in Dante books. In the second place, it contains an exhaustive array of the evidence (or rather the want of evidence) on the subject of Dante's relations with his wife Gemma. The reader may rest assured that there is no further evidence of any kind against poor Gemma to be had; and he will see that what is here given amounts to nothing.

I confess, however, that it has been an uncongenial task to translate and give to the English public this elaborate and, as I cannot but think, unchivalrous attempt to gather material, where none exists, for an unfavourable judgment on Gemma. 'Boccaccio does not allege a

single discreditable act against Gemma' (p. 239); and no one else alleges anything at all except on his authority. What little Boccaccio does allege is entirely to Gemma's credit. Let us rest in this, and be thankful to know that there is nothing whatever to prevent our extending to this unhappy lady the respectful sympathy which she claims from us as the mother of Dante's children, whatever else she may or may not have been to him.

Dr. Witte might have been warned by Imbriani's article against the frightful aberrations into which ingenuity may lead a man who is determined to construct a domestic history (by preference disagreeable) out of non-existent material.

As to Dante's silence concerning his wife, one might be tempted to think that in this extraordinary family there existed a conspiracy of silence; for Dante, the ardent friend and gracious companion, ignores his children, who surrounded him in his declining years, as completely as he does his wife. And on their side, his two sons Jacopo and Piero, most ardent admirers of his genius, write their Commentaries in a spirit so absolutely objective, and are so completely wanting in personal touches, reminiscences, or references of any kind, that the well-vouched authenticity of the Commentaries attributed to them has been questioned on this account alone.

Is it worth noting that the words 'Oh, shouldst thou ever see thy sacred locks . . . decked by Phyllis' self' of the second letter of Johannes de Virgilio to Dante (line 45) are explained by many Commentators as referring to Gemma?—and indeed it is difficult to see to whom else they can refer. If this interpretation is correct, it shows, at any rate, that an intimate friend of Dante's in his closing years knew nothing of any estrangement between the husband and wife, and took it for granted that their reunion would be one of the crowning joys of the poet's return. Without attributing any very high value to this inference, one may at least say that it outweighs, both in directness and explicitness, the shadowy deductions contained in the essay.

P. 236. The Florentine year began at the end of March, so that March 14th, for example, was before New Year's Day, and the year was still running under its old number. Thus our March 14th, 1300, would still fall under 1299. Florentine dates in January, February, and March must therefore have an additional year added to them.

P. 240. By an evident oversight some essential words are dropped out of this document in the *Dante-Forschungen*, ii. 67, l. 3. I have restored them from Gargani.

The following translation of the document, being the work of an amateur, should be received by the reader with due caution, but may (it is hoped) be trusted as correct enough to show its substantial bearing on the matter in hand:—

'And further she wills that of her goods be given and paid to Madame Gemma, her daughter, wife of Dante Alighieri of Florence, after her death, a legacy of 300 small florins, provided that the said

Dante, or his heirs, shall have discharged and absolved the aforesaid heirs of Madame Maria from every obligation by which they may be obliged or bound from whatsoever cause, on behalf of the said Dante, to any person or persons, and in particular from the obligation which the said Manetto incurred as surety for the said Dante, or as joint borrower with him, to Pannocchia and to Jacopo de' Corbizi for 480 florins of gold, or more or less, and from the obligation of 90 florins of gold, or more or less, for which they are bound to Ubaldino for the said Dante, whether as joint borrower or under title of surety for him. And from the obligation of 46 of gold, or more or less, for which the said Dominus Manettus [or his heirs] were bound for the said Dante, whether as joint borrower with him or under the title of surety for him.'

TO ESSAY X.

In 1888 Francesco Macrì-Leone published in Florence a critical text of Boccaccio's *Vita di Dante* which has been accepted as the standard edition. In his elaborate introduction (pp. clxxiv) he goes very fully into the whole matter of the two versions of the Life. On p. xxxix he says: 'Witte was the first to distinguish categorically between the MSS. of the complete Life and those of the Compendium, and he gave a very valuable list of them, though it was not altogether free from error'; and in a note he adds: 'Thus, for example, a Palatine MS., vii. 712, is cited, which does not contain the *Vita*, and the Riccardian 1050 is given as fragmentary, whereas it is really only put together with the leaves in the wrong order. The codex 2278, which Witte says Moutier cites (as he does), and which he could not find among the Riccardian codices, does exist, but contains the Compendium, and I cannot conceive how Moutier could cite it as one of those on which his edition was based.'

Macrì-Leone's researches confirm Dr. Witte's belief that the Compendium is a gradual growth, and that it is not from the hand of Boccaccio. His list of MSS. and his bibliographical data are much fuller than Witte's, but generally serve to confirm his judgments.

Macrì-Leone dates the *Vita* 1364. See p. lxxxii.

P. 265. The Colophon of Vendelino's edition of 1477 took the form of a sonnet.

P. 270. The Guicciardini collection is part of the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence.

TO ESSAY XI.

A very elaborate account of the discovery of Dante's bones, with numerous plans, will be found in Corrado Ricci's *L'ultimo rifugio di Dante Alighieri* (Milan, 1891), pp. 358 *sq.*

TO ESSAY XIII.

P. 313 *note* 1. The Commentator referred to by the Deputati as Benvenuto da Imola is of course Jacopo della Lana, whose Commentary, printed by Vendelino in his edition of 1477, was ascribed by him to Benvenuto. Even so, however, it will be noted that the Deputati express a judgment widely differing from that of Dr. Witte.

P. 315. The Rehdiger or Elizabethan Library of Breslau, opened in 1661, and formerly kept in the Church of St. Elizabeth, is now part of the Stadtbibliothek (*Minerva*).

Ibid. *L'Infarinato* of note 2 (five lines from the end) is the Salviati of note 4 on the preceding page.

P. 319. Terzago was Nidobeato's partner.

P. 323 *note* 3. With Torri's edition of *Ottimo* in his hand, the reader will have no difficulty in finding the references to the first three of the poems mentioned. But the two others are not to be traced there. There is probably no mistake on Witte's part, however. The reference to '*Le dolci rime d'Amor ch' io solia*' he found (cf. *Jahrb.* 1828, iv. p. 30) in a MS. of the *Ottimo* (de Batines, II.), and probably the reference to the sonnet has a like justification, though I have not succeeded in tracing it.

P. 326. The story is that some gravediggers found the head of one long dead, but with a tongue almost as of a living man. On Gregory's conjuration the head spoke and declared itself to be Trajan's.

There is a curiously similar story in the Dutch version (only) of the legend of St. Brandan. A deceased giant's head is discovered, and speaks. On being offered the option of a return to life, the head declines, because the giant was a heathen and notes that his torments are not as great as those of the condemned Christians, whose ranks he would presumably join when next he died, if he had another life on earth. See Dr. Carl Schröder's edition (Erlangen, 1871), pp. 95 *sq.*

P. 334. The Strozzi MSS. are in the Laurentian Library.

P. 341 *note* 1. There seems to be a mistake about Ausonius. The words of the *Ottimo* (in Torri's edition) are 'Virgil did not know this light [of the true faith] . . . and where the Cento takes his verses and applies them to the faith it does not say that Virgil understood or wrote them with this intention.'

A Cento is a species of composition in which the writer shows his ingenuity by saying whatever he desires to say by means of continuous quotations from some one author (preferably Virgil), without a single word of his own to connect them. Now Ausonius (fourth century) did write a celebrated Virgilian Cento, but it was a nuptial poem, and had nothing to do with Christianity; nor does the *Ottimo* mention his name.

There is a Cento '*De Ecclesia*,' which has a certain celebrity, to be found in Riese's *Anthologia Latina*, Teubner, 1869 (No. 16). It is a very poor thing. There is a much better one, without a title, in the same collection (No. 719). This latter, which Riese believes to be

referred to in a decree of Pope Gelasius I. (end of fifth century), may well be the work intended by the *Ottimo*.

P. 342 *last line. Dante Bartolin.* i.e. '*La Divina Commedia giusta la lezione del codice Bartoliniano.*' The MS. in question takes its name from a former possessor. It is No. 306 in de Batines.

P. 344. The reader will not find Dr. Witte's instances of various readings in Jacopo della Lana's text supported by Scarabelli's editions. But they may all be checked in Vendelino's edition, except perhaps the interpretation of 'fosse' as 'graves,' which I have not found. It may be given by Witte on MS. authority.

Ibid. Caetani's Postillator, i.e. the writer of marginal notes (*postilla*) on the MS. in the possession of the Duke of Sermoneta (Caetani) in Rome. It is No. 375 in de Batines.

P. 345. *The Milanese Sexvirs*, i.e. the six scholars supposed to have been moved by Archbishop Visconti of Milan to write a Comment on Dante. Cf. above, p. 26 note 1.

P. 351. I do not find that the projected new edition by Cerrotti was ever proceeded with.

P. 356. I cannot explain the reference to Sign. Libri's Codex.

TO ESSAY XIV.

WHEN this essay was first published it was followed by *Alcuni Supplimenti alla Bibliografia Dantesca del Sign. Visconte Colomb de Batines* (pp. 25-52), which is registered as an independent work in the list of Dr. Witte's writings on p. xix above.

This will explain how it is that a number of bibliographical notices are quoted from Witte's *Quando e da chi sia composto l'Ottimo comento* in Koch's Catalogue of the Fiske Library of Cornell University, which are not to be found in the essay with that title in the present volume.

TO ESSAY XV.

THE eight passages in question, in Moore's edition, are i. 1 : 111; i. 1 : 80, 83, 101, 135; i. 2 : 1; i. 10 : 2; iv. 22 : 7.

TO ESSAY XVI.

I shall not attempt the superfluous task of explaining the references in this lecture. Any reader who does not follow them will find most of them explained in any handbook of Italian history, for instance the concluding chapter of Hunt's *Italy* in the series edited by Freeman.

Special note should be made that the year of delivery of this lecture was the year in which the central and southern regions of Italy had declared themselves a part of Victor Emanuel's kingdom, as the result of the 'unauthorised' campaigns of Garibaldi, towards which Victor Emanuel and Cavour had adopted a somewhat equivocal attitude. Venice and Rome alone were still occupied by the troops of Austria and France respectively. The passage from 'Even the Papal entreaties'

(bottom of p. 403) to the end of the lecture was added, like the introductory note, in 1878. I regret that my very imperfect knowledge of modern Italian history does not enable me to elucidate the reference on page 116, but it is a note of Dr. Witte's in 1878, not of my own in 1898, sadly appropriate as the latter would have been.

The reader will, of course, have his own opinion as to the methods by which the unification of Italy and the unification of Germany, respectively, were brought about, and the shares taken respectively by France and Germany in bringing Italian unity to pass. But even if he dissents from Dr. Witte's opinions, or objects to the tone of some passages in the lecture, he will recognise the sagacity of many of the author's remarks; and, what is more to our purpose, he will appreciate the firmness of the treatment of Dante's political views, and the fine sweep of the historical survey which is contained in the early portion of this essay.

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EXPLANATION OF THE REFERENCES ON THE PLAN.

I. CHURCHES AND PIAZZAS.

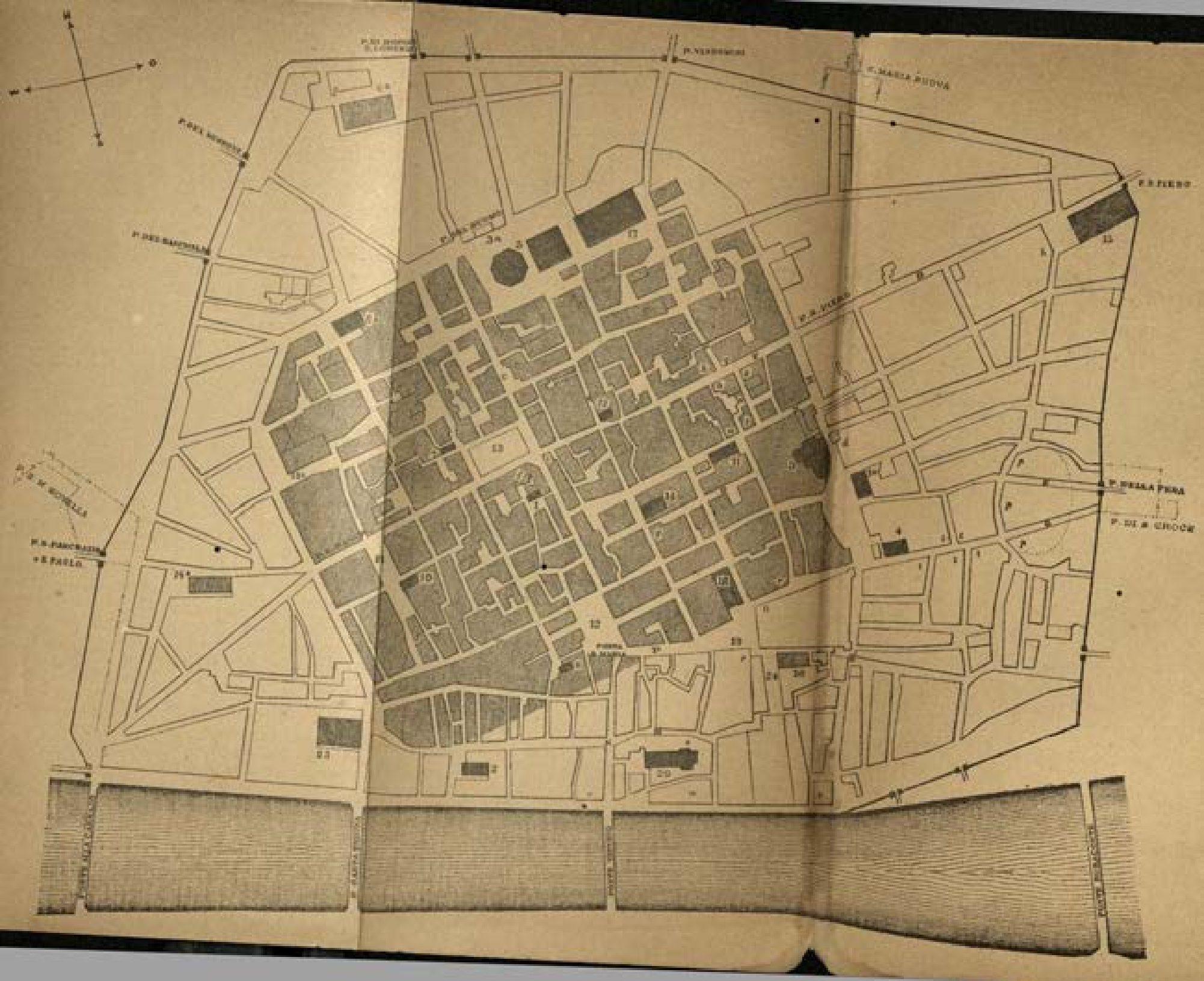
1. Church and Piazza of Sant' Andrea.
1*a*. Church and Piazza of Sant' Apollinare.
2. Church and Piazza of Santi Apostoli.
3. The Badía of Florence.
3*a*. Canonry.
4. Church of San Firenze.
5. Church and Hospital of S. John Baptist.
6. Corn Market.
6*a*. Church and Piazza of San Lorenzo.
7. Church of Santa Maria in Campidoglio.
8. Church and Piazza of Santa Maria Maggiore.
9. Church of Santa Maria sopra Porta.
10. Church and Piazza of Santa Maria degli Ughi.
11. Church and Piazza of San Martino.
12. Mercato Nuovo.
13. Mercato Vecchio.
13*a*. Church of San Michele Berteldi.
14. Church of San Michele in Orto.
14*a*. Church and Piazza of San Pancrazio.
15. Church and Piazza of San Pier Maggiore.
16. Church of San Piero Scheraggio.
17. Church of Santa Reparata, with the Cathedral Close contiguous.
18. Church of San Romolo.
19. Piazza della Signioría.
20. Church of San Stefano.
21. Piazza Tornaquinci (now *degli Strozzi*).
22. Church of San Tommaso.
23. Church and Piazza of Santa Trinità.
24. Present Piazza degli Ufizi, formerly Piazza San Piero Scheraggio.

II. STREETS.

A. Corso degli Adimari.
B. Borgo degli Albizi, or San Pierc
C. Calimara.
D. Via de' Cerchi (with Piazza).
E. Via de' Cocchi.
F. Corso, or Via San Piero. The continuation Westward, Via de' Speziali and Via degli Strozzi.
G. Borgo de' Greci.
H. Via Lambertesca.
I. Via della Ninna.
K. Via Por Santa Maria.
L. Via Porta Rossa.
M. Via del Proconsolo.
N. Via de' Portinari, or Via Ricciarda.
O. Via dello Studio.
P. Vaccherecia.

III. SECULAR BUILDINGS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

a. Houses of the Allighieri.
b. Castle of Altafonte.
c. Houses of the Amidei.
d. Bargello.
e. Houses of the Buondelmonti.
f. Houses of the Caponsacchi.
g. Houses of the Cerchi.
h. Houses of the Donati.
i. Houses of the Elisei.
k. Houses of the Giuochi.
l. Houses of the Greci.
m. Houses of the Importuni.
n. Statue of Mars.
o. Houses of the Ormanni and Foraboschi.
p. Houses of the Peruzzi.
q. Houses of the Portinari.
r. Houses of the Uberti.
s. Approximate outline of the Palazzo del Comune (or Vecchio), begun in Dante's time.
t. Houses of the Sacchetti.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